



# **PARTICIPATION AS A COMPLEX PHENOMENON IN THE EFL CLASSROOM**

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## **Abstract**

The present study is concerned with the process of how EFL learners organise their classroom participation. Although oral engagement is considered the main indicator of student participation, opportunities to participate in oral discussion are not always available to all students due to different issues, (e.g., a large number of students in the class). The main focus of this research is therefore to describe how students participate in classroom discussion through other modes rather than explicit oral participation. This study involves the analysis of different forms of student participation used alternatively in EFL classrooms. Such forms related to the ongoing discussion are employed for different purposes by EFL students.

Since previous studies have focused on verbal participation such the interrelated issues between teacher-student exchanges, much remains to be learned about the micro-interactional practice used by language learners to participate in classroom interaction. Therefore, this study aims to extend the existing knowledge of student participation in EFL classrooms. The analysis of data is based on Conversation Analysis (CA) methodology which can be used to analyse language and its environment, including a combination of talk and the use of body in the classroom context. The data base consists of about 14 hours of video and audio recorded lessons taken from second and third-year students of English Departments in Libyan universities. The reason for using video and audio recordings is that to have good chance for deep analysis of talk and embodied action.

The findings show that there are other forms of student participation, including embodied action and desk talk. Embodied action analysis reveals that students as collaborative members rely on a variety of embodiments to sustain classroom interaction. The results obtained from this analysis provide evidence of the extent to which such these embodiments are exploited by language learners to participate in their classrooms. This means that students

are not only orally participating but they are also non-orally constructing a kind of group participation through distributing meaningful signals. Such signals include different patterns of gazes, facial expressions, nodding heads body orientation and movements towards teacher or class.

In addition, the findings show that desk talk produced beyond teacher-student talk is actually relating to the ongoing discussion. Students produce such desk talk in order to cope with ongoing discussion and to compensate for their lack of explicit oral opportunities to participate in classroom discussion.

## **Declaration**

I certify that all the material submitted in this work which is not my own work has been identified and that no material is included which has been submitted for any other award or qualification.

Abdalla Warayet

Date: 29th July 2011.



## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the memory of my late mother, and to my beloved wife. It is also dedicated to my brothers, my sisters and my children.

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## **Glossary**

CA	Conversation Analysis
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DA	Discourse Analysis
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IRF/E	Initiation, Response and Feedback/Evaluation
MLJ	Modern Language Journal
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TCUs	Turn Constructional Units

## **Chapter One**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This introductory chapter presents the aim of the study and the research purpose, including perspectives on participation in EFL classrooms. The background of the context in which this study was conducted (learning English as a foreign language by Libyan students) is introduced in relation to the research project. Then, a statement of the research problem and the significance of the study are presented. Finally, an outline of the thesis is provided.

## **1. Introduction**

The classroom is the most formal setting where educational processes occur. It includes the interaction phenomenon through which the teaching and learning issues are achieved and organised by teachers and students. In the classroom, both teachers and students perform a variety of different types of actions in order to accomplish classroom activities. Among these actions, classroom participation is a fundamental interactional and pedagogical task through which students display their involvement.

The main focus of this study is to describe student participation in English as a foreign language (EFL) in Libyan university classrooms, and to analyse how students organise their participation during and beyond teacher-student oral discussions as part of the classroom activities. The aim is, therefore, to contribute to contemporary discussions of the pedagogical importance of how students organise their participation in EFL classroom activities. Student participation in this study is addressed within the broader interactional and sequential organisation of classroom activities. The description of student participation is mainly built on teacher-fronted activities where students are led to participate orally. The focus is on how students employ not only talk to participate in such classroom activities but also on different types of participation.

### **1. 1. Definitions**

In order to avoid any ambiguity or misunderstanding, some terms used widely in this study are defined:

### ***Participation***

Participation in this study refers to all modes that students employ to engage in the ongoing activity. More specifically, participation in this study means to employ not only talk but also all other types of engagements. For example, students that are sitting in the classroom are participating when they are following what is going on, even without contributing in the ongoing discussion. Therefore, the present study does not only consider student participation from the traditional perspective of teacher-student talk. Rather, it is also concerned with student participation organised in other ways during and/or beyond teacher-student discussions, and how this is related to classroom interaction.

### ***Engagement***

Engagement means to take or have a part or share, as with others; in ongoing classroom activities. It means to occupy the attention with providing an action. More specifically, engagement refers to how much students are enrolled or added to the ongoing task. For example, students can be more or less engaged with ongoing discussion when they are adding to the conversation in classroom. Therefore, engagement in this study is a kind of classroom participation. This means that classroom participation may include different types of engagements such as verbal or nonverbal engagement.

### ***Embodied action***

The term 'embodied action' indicates movements that participants use or resort to when they want to be engaged and participate in ongoing activities in

their classrooms. That is, participants rely on certain embodied actions during the oral activities instead of participating by speaking. These actions include non-verbal cues such as gaze patterns and body orientation.

### ***Desk-talk***

Desk-talk in this study is defined as turns in which students self-select and nominate themselves to participate beyond the classroom discussion and when it is ongoing. Only those desk-turns between two or more students which appear to be designed as contributions to the ongoing discussion are included in this type of participation. Therefore, these utterances may not be aimed at the whole group discussion; but are designed mainly for student(s) sitting next to the speaker (desk partner) when the other members of the class are busy with the ongoing talk. This, however, excludes instances of 'private speech' in which turns are designed for the speaker her/himself and not for anybody else (Ohta, 2001).

More specifically, the concept of participation in the present study is used to describe these other types of student participation rather than explicit oral participation. Although explicit oral participation can generally be considered as a basic indicator of student participation, many EFL students still choose not to participate orally during classroom discussions. This research endeavours to discover if students are participated in classroom discussion in other ways besides oral participation. To address such ways of participation, different types of student engagement during ongoing interaction as well as students' talk beyond teacher-student verbal interaction are examined. In this

way, the present study seeks to extend existing knowledge of student participation by describing what is actually going on during classroom interaction.

In attempting to enhance modes of participation and the effectiveness of interaction in the classroom, there is concern over what to do about students who are less inclined to participate orally. In the context of EFL classes examined in this study, opportunities for explicit oral participation are not equally available to all students. This is due to various factors, such as overcrowded classrooms and the time allotted which are considered here. Using video and audio recordings, student participation in EFL classroom interaction is described and analysed.

## **1. 2. Conceptual and analytical framework**

As noted above, the present study aims to describe the complexity of student participation in EFL classroom activity. In order to uncover the nature of such participation in whole group settings, the research is mainly concerned with the participation process itself rather than with participation as a source of language learning. Therefore, the analysis in this study is basically descriptive which includes the description of student participation rather than analysing learning or pedagogical concepts. It attempts to describe how EFL students organise their participation in the classroom. This study thus attempts to expand the notion of classroom participation, contributing to the area of classroom discourse that has recently received more attention.

The key resources of this study are followed by the specific methodological tools of conversation analysis (CA) for understanding language in interaction and basic organisational principles of talk-in-interaction (see Atkinson and Heritage 1984; ten Have 2007). This research, therefore, is conversation analytic in its orientation. Although CA initially focused on what is called everyday conversation, this focus has increasingly shifted to institutional settings. The institutional research can show how interaction in institutions differs from that in ordinary conversation (Hester and Francis 2000, p. 392). For example, turn-taking in ordinary conversation is locally managed, and all participants can self-select to participate where necessary, while turn-taking in classroom interaction operates differently where the teacher has interactional rights (McHoul, 1990). Taking account of this difference, ten Have (2007) argues that pure CA is the study of interaction in its own right, and applied CA is the study of how “interactions with an institutional purpose ... were organized as institutional interactions” (p. 174). This does not necessarily mean, however, that pure and applied CA are divided according to the study of ‘ordinary conversation’ and ‘institutional interaction’ respectively. Rather pure CA is the study of any talk-in-interaction, whatever its context, and applied CA mainly focuses on the organisation of interaction in an institutional setting such as turn-taking; and on “the ways in which the interactants show their orientations to these situations and requirements” (ten Have 2007, p. 8). Since the present study attempts to describe how students organise their participation in the institutional context of classroom settings, the theoretical and analytical methods employed for this study lie mostly within the applied CA framework (ten Have 2007, p. 174). Also, the analysis of data in this study

is descriptive in some way because it deals mainly with identifying different types of embodied action participation in classroom discourse.

## **2. Perspectives on EFL Classroom Participation**

In English as a foreign language context, teachers always encourage their students to speak in the classroom, and their participation is often evaluated according to the amount and quality of their talk, even though opportunities are not always available for everyone to participate orally. In most EFL classrooms, students are put in teacher-fronted activities where they are only able to contribute the minimum of speech and, moreover, participation in such settings is more difficult to elicit. Putting students into such classes means that they are less likely to speak without being prompted to participate during ongoing activities. Also, teachers often encourage their students to talk, and feel that they have had a successful lesson when participation merely involves any student speaking. Students in such classrooms sometimes need to speak up altogether as a group.

Some studies have indicated that student talk can be considered as a crucial factor in most language teaching methods even though they vary from one approach to another. For example, Celce-Murcia (2001) reviewed nine approaches to the teaching of language and found that most, except for the grammar-translation and reading methods, required students to talk. More precisely, in the communicative approach of language teaching, the most popular method for language teaching since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, student oral contribution has been regarded as essential for classroom



participation. By describing an 'interactive' approach to pedagogy, Brown (2001) suggested that, since teachers have some degree of control over student talk, they have to provide students with opportunities to talk and try the language out (p. 63). Although it is clear that student talk is encouraged in most language teaching approaches, opportunities for talk especially in large classrooms are not necessarily equally available for all students. Even when opportunities for talk in the classroom are not available to some degree, there is little discussion of different types of student participation that should be considered. Therefore, this study describes these different types of participation employed by students during and beyond teacher-student discussions in EFL classrooms.

As indicated above, although EFL learners may be willing to participate in their classrooms, opportunities to engage in oral discussion are not adequately available to all students due to issues related to the classroom context, including teachers' control over student talk in teacher fronted activities. Due to this and from the present author's experience as a teacher, it is often the case that when students are prompted to speak, answer questions or give comments on their responses, they speak altogether and give answers as a group. Further, they may not only be orally participating but also non-orally constructing a kind of group participation through distributing meaningful signals. That is, in addition to their speaking to participate, they are gazing, smiling, nodding their heads and glancing at each other when they have a discussion in the classroom.

In this way, achieving participation in classroom relies not only on the ability to participate orally, but also non-orally and by using different signals of embodied action. Thus, one aspect of this study is its attention to the role that human action plays in achieving classroom participation, and its focus on how the entire classroom can be involved in a discussion at the same time. This study also includes an analysis of student-student talk (desk-talk) that occurs beyond the teacher and students' explicit talk, which is also exploited by EFL learners as a way to participate in classroom discussion. The results obtained from this analysis may provide evidence of the extent to which such 'embodied actions' during ongoing discussion and 'desk-talk' behind the scenes are specially exploited by EFL learners to participate in their classrooms.

While classroom interaction has been studied by some researchers and linguists who have interest in the 'interrelated issues' between teacher and learners (Walsh, 2002; Seedhouse, 1996; Johnson, 1995), and by those who have interest in the effects of 'participatory structures' such as task-based (Jenks, 2007; Ellis, 2003; Robinson, 2001), such studies usually focus on explicit verbal participation. Much remains to be learned about the micro-interactive practice used by language learners in classroom work as part of an overall understanding of how language learners participate through the range of embodied actions which they employ. Yet the relevance of this study is not limited to language-learner talk in their classrooms. The participation of the entire class analysed in this study is also relevant to those concerned more generally with ways that embodied action and desk-talk are employed.

### **3. Background and Context**

English in Libya is taught as a foreign language. Until recently, students start learning English when they commenced the seventh year at preparatory school. From the school year 2005/6, the English language has been introduced as a main subject at primary level and is now taught from the fifth primary year. As a result, the English language is now receiving more interest and learning it has become one of the main goals of Libyan students who continue learning English through all the years of their education.

The recent changes in Libyan policy towards teaching English have led the government to revise the English language programme in Libyan schools and educational institutes. In the school year 1998/9, a new English syllabus was introduced to cope with developments in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Students are now taught through this new syllabus which is edited in the UK by native speakers who are specialists in curriculum design. According to some researchers, this new material is mainly based on the communicative approach which gives priority to the four skills of language (see, e.g., Warayet, 2001; Al-Buaishi, 2004). Course books are also accompanied by valuable supplementary materials such as workbooks, teacher's books, and audio-cassettes containing spoken material to improve not only the students' speaking skills but also their pronunciation capabilities. These are especially valuable because they were composed by native speakers of the language.

### **3. 1. The goals of teaching English**

English as a foreign language in Libya is taught for various purposes. One of these is to serve academic purposes. A great deal of the academic literature in the world at present, whether in the field of the sciences or arts, is written in English. Teaching English to Libyan students, therefore, aims to help them understand the specialist literature in order to pursue their graduate studies. Another important target of teaching English in Libya is its general importance in the world today. It is taught to enable students to communicate in English in order to cope with the developments in modern technology used around the world.

A further major purpose is the economy. English is the language of business around the world because of its functions as an international language. It is used in all business transactions between Libyan and non-Arabic speakers, particularly in financial institutions with international contacts. It brings in a great deal of revenue to the country through international trade and industry.

Libyan people, therefore, need to use English not only for academic purposes or to use modern technology, but also to make money and participate in the world economy. In addition, it creates work for many people in a variety of ways, and the priority of having a good job in many different fields requires learning this language.

### **3. 2. Teaching English in the Libyan context**

The traditional method used to teach English during the last few decades has been a modified grammar-translation method in which the focus of teaching is more on teaching vocabulary and the structures of the language. However, this does not mean that such traditional method and accompanying materials are unable to produce some successful students in learning the language. As Brown (2000) states, “certain learners seemed to be successful regardless of methods or techniques of teaching” (p. 123). It can be inferred from this that, no matter what teaching method is used; there will always be those learners who are successful in learning the language and others who are unsuccessful.

However, as mentioned above in section 3, teaching English in Libya has recently seen some changes. Al-Buaishi (2004) claims that the approach to teaching recommended in the new textbooks that have been introduced in preparatory and secondary schools can be described as being communicative (p. 4). It is communicative at least in the sense of the stated aims and tasks described in this new material (see, e.g., Quintana, 1999). It focuses on the four language skills and achieving a balance between teaching grammar and the strategies used in each of the four skills. Moreover, all of the activities and tasks designed require some degree of communication and interaction between teachers and students and among students themselves.

However, this may contrast with what is practised in Libyan classes at present. Even though there is a focus on the four skills from the perspective of

the material used, the present researcher observed during participation in the teacher training programme in 2003 at Tripoli University that some teachers still follow traditional methods of teaching. It seems that they are unwilling or unable to teach the new material communicatively. Therefore, some teachers may need to be trained before teaching with this new material. And although some Libyan teachers have been trained to use the new material, they may need still more training.

English is only taught for approximately two hours per week as a part of the curriculum at the university level. However, in specialised English departments, learners are exposed to a variety of materials chosen by their teachers and collected from different sources. These materials may be chosen arbitrarily and no specific criteria or objectives are considered. The approach to teaching English adopted at present, as indicated above, seems to be communicative, particularly in preparatory and secondary schools where the new material is used (Al-Buaishi, 2004). However, in the universities and higher institutes the focus is still on teaching vocabulary and the structures of the language.

These are just some of the problems that have arisen from teaching with the new material. However, the advantages of the new material are manifold. Most obviously, it introduces a great number of activities and language skills into the class in different tasks such as '*the skills of reading, speaking, writing listening, pronunciation and lab work*' (see appendix 3). All of these lead students into classroom interactions using the four skills of language

simultaneously. The activities are also introduced in different forms in order to enrich not only the students' learning but also the teaching methods applied.

A further positive aspect of the new material is the teaching approach which encourages communication and interaction between students. This is by focusing on the four skills together and making a balance between teaching grammar and the necessary strategies for each of the four skills. No grammatical structures are explicitly taught, and students are led to understand the rules from the exercises provided. Moreover, new words are taught by asking questions and highlighting key sentences to help students understand the meaning. Vocabulary is taught using the four skills of language rather than bilingual word lists, and meaning is revealed from context. Vocabulary is also introduced by listening to taped material as well as looking at visual illustrations throughout the books.

In the light of the benefits and the problems which the new syllabus brings, not only to students but also to teachers, it is clear that the material introduced is beneficial for teaching English. It should be introduced gradually during teacher training so as to overcome the negative effects outlined above. The positive effects of this material, and especially its basic approach, should be quite useful in successfully developing the process of teaching and learning. For all these reasons, the syllabus used today is making it better than ever before for students to improve their language ability.

Learning English as a foreign language in Libya is compulsory. It represents the primary step towards various fields such as in academic studies. In this way, the learning process is achieved within the formal setting of the classroom which provides the main opportunities for foreign language learning. As Wagner (2004) pointed out, because language learning is designed to be learned in the classroom, we still know very little of what students actually learn, and how language learning opportunities within the classroom differ from those outside it. Also, van Lier (1988) similarly noted that “we do not know if a classroom that tries to be as little a traditional classroom as possible is necessarily more effective than a more structured and organised one” (p. xvii). This means that we do not know very much about how different modes of classroom organisation provide students with opportunities for learning the language. Therefore, investigations are needed to look at opportunities provided in the classroom for language learning and how the classroom is organised to supply students with different ways of learning.

### **3. 3. Students’ level of English**

According to the above discussion, the new materials that have been introduced to teaching English in Libya may well improve the students’ language abilities. However, these new materials will take a considerable amount of time before much significant results can be obtained. Furthermore, according to the present author’s experience of teaching in a number of Libyan schools and universities, it can be asserted that students are generally good at English but they need more support to develop their abilities.



As with other school subjects, English is taught as a compulsory subject at all grades. Students must be able to pass English exams in each year of school. They cannot move to the next grade unless they have passed their English exams successfully. Therefore, if they fail in English they remain at the same grade.

#### **4. Statement of the Problem**

Libyan students learn English as a foreign language, while their native language is Arabic. The only way to achieve this is through formal instruction in the classroom where most language teachers are native speakers of Arabic. There is little opportunity to learn English through natural interaction in the target language. This would only be possible when students encounter native speakers of English who come to the country as tourists, which rarely happens. Since English is not used in daily situations and Arabic is the language used everywhere, it is thus very important to concentrate on the only place where students learn the language (the classroom) to understand what is going on during their learning activities.

Previous studies in this field have focused on pair work or small group activities (see, e.g., Ohta, 1995; Mori, 2002) where students have more opportunities to participate in classroom talk. Yet other studies of language classrooms have indicated that little room is allowed for student talk because the teacher strictly controls turn-taking process (e.g., Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979; Green et al., 1988). This means that the teacher is the director of activities, playing a crucial role in providing students with

opportunities for participating in the classroom. More specifically, classrooms of teacher-fronted activities often give the teacher the right to hold the floor and to designate speakers. In such situation, teachers are often the managers of classroom activities. They may constrain student talk on some occasions. Therefore, students may resort to other forms of classroom participation since they are not fully under the teacher's control. As Allwright (1980) claimed, "learners are not wholly under the control of the teacher ... they have some freedom concerning the nature and extent of their participation in class" (p. 166). Therefore, an understanding of how students organise their participation in ways different from the explicit talk in the classroom is extremely important for foreign/second language pedagogy.

Further research is thus needed to describe the structure of student participation, particularly in EFL settings dominated by teacher-fronted activities. Exploring interaction in such settings, where students spend most of their time, may help teachers to understand its nature in providing students with better opportunities for learning. Following this line of research, the present study provides a description of student participation as it is organised in EFL classrooms.

## **5. Significance of the Study**

Student participation in foreign/second language classrooms is widely considered as a very important aspect of the learning process. In order to take part in this process, students are invited to participate actively in their classrooms. Despite teachers often encouraging students to participate,

opportunities for students to talk are not always available and students may employ other ways of classroom participation. For this reason, describing the ways in which students organise their participation in the classroom is important for research in foreign/second language pedagogy (see, e.g., Sahlström, 1999).

The present study builds on previous research in the area of classroom interaction in several respects. Firstly, the focus is on the role that human action plays in achieving student participation in entire classrooms. Such participation occurs frequently in EFL classrooms but has not been a concern of many recent studies. Secondly, unlike the majority of previous studies, the nature of the present analysis in this setting is qualitative, using conversation analysis (CA) for a turn-by-turn in depth investigation of what is going on. Finally, unlike Carroll's (2004) and Olsher's (2004) research and other recent conversation-analytic studies of classroom interaction which focus on small group or pair work activities where student talk is more productive, the description of student participation in this study mainly relates to classrooms with large numbers of students, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of different modes of student participation.

This study addresses other ways of student participation which are different from explicit oral participation in EFL classrooms. More specifically, the present study does not consider student participation from the traditional perspective of teacher-student talk. Rather, it is concerned with student participation organised in other ways during and/or beyond teacher-student

discussions, and how this is related to classroom interaction. Therefore, two types of student participation during ongoing classroom activities are described in this study: 1) embodied action, in which students create different/similar signals in order to participate non-verbally in the classroom discussion; and 2) desk-talk, in which students produce related utterances beyond classroom discussion and behind the scenes in order to be involved in their classroom interaction.

Thus, the findings of this study may provide significant information to extend our understanding of classroom participation by describing different modes of student participation. It is unlike most of the studies in this specific field since it is conducted in the EFL context, potentially facilitating a deeper understanding of classroom interaction in a context where English is not the medium of communication in the learners' daily life.

Moreover, most previous studies of classroom participation have mainly focused on analysing teacher-student oral interaction, without describing the other methods of student participation. The current study goes a step further by not only investigating classroom participation in the EFL context, but also by describing the different types of student participation. Since the study of classroom interaction is a comprehensive field that involves social, linguistic, and communication variables, the results will have implications for classroom teachers and designers of teaching material. Teachers may utilize the findings to extend their knowledge of different types of student participation and how students behave in relation to classroom discussion.

## **6. Research Questions**

The present research aims to uncover the organisation of student participation in EFL classroom activities, and the study is guided by the following research questions:

- 1) How is student participation organized during ongoing discussion in the EFL classroom?
- 2) How is student participation organized beyond teacher-student oral interaction in the EFL classroom?

By answering these questions, this research presents a description of the ways that students organise their participation in EFL classrooms and how the results are relevant to classroom interaction. These research questions imply that students in EFL classroom activities, especially in teacher-fronted activity, may organise different modes of participation when they do not have equal opportunities to participate orally during ongoing discussion. Answering these questions entails testing the complexity of classroom participation where students resort to non-verbal movements or desk-talk to supplement opportunities for oral participation. Detailed analysis of these types of participation can show how students actually organise such non-verbal and desk-talk participation. Therefore, this study examines whether students depend on other methods of participation such as non-verbal and desk-talk modes when they are not participating orally. Consequently, the pedagogical rationale for whether or not students should be provided with equal

opportunities for participating is beyond the scope of this research. Rather, the study discusses what is meant by 'other types of participation'; and whether students employ ways different from oral participation.

Some studies have argued that classroom activities can be understood differently by students and, therefore, they may participate in different ways in their classrooms (see, e.g., Ohta, 2001; Hall, 2002). For example, Sahlström's (1999) study of Swedish children in comprehensive schools shows that the social organisation of the classroom may increase students' opportunities for participation. Students therefore have different opportunities to participate depending on the task involved. Also, Mortensen's (2008) research on Denmark adults learning Danish as a second language shows that the ways in which the classroom is organised may facilitate the participation of some students, but constrains the participation of others. Since such studies were conducted in European countries with students learning a second language, more research is required in other social contexts and languages. The present study, therefore, describes student participation in the EFL context, using Libyan university students as participants.

This leads to the perspective in which classroom interaction can be approached. As discussed in the next chapter, the focus on the role of the teacher has been the priority of most previous studies, looking at how teachers organise the classroom and how students behave in relation to the teacher's moves (e.g., Paoletti and Fele, 2004). But since the classroom is designed to facilitate the learning of students, the primary interest should not

be on the teacher, but on the students. Therefore, turning the focus towards how students participate in and orient themselves to classroom activities might be more important for understanding classroom interaction.

In order to reduce the complexity of the classroom situation, some other studies (e.g., Payne and Hustler, 1980) have focused mainly on individual participation, where one participant interacts with the teacher, rather than focusing on participation in the entire classroom. These limited perspectives, however, lead this study to examine the other ways of student participation and to analyse the complexity of the classroom as a multiparty setting.

Furthermore, several recent studies have considered teaching/learning English in Libya (e.g. Ahmed, 2008; Aldabbus, 2008; Mayouf, 2005). Although most of these studies have focused on intermediate and university level students, none of them has described the participation of students in their classroom interaction. Moreover, classroom participation has generally been investigated in ESL settings rather than EFL classrooms (see, e.g., Sahlström, 1999; Mortensen, 2008). The originality of the present study derives from the fact that it seems to be the first attempt to deal with this particular topic in such EFL context, 'Libyan'. Even though student participation has been looked at in other contexts, the current study adopts a more rigorous methodology using CA, which also seems to be the first attempt to use this approach in Libyan context. Moreover, instead of using traditional methods which rely completely on the participants' perspectives and researcher's questions, for example using questionnaires and interviews,

the authentic tools of video and audio recordings were employed to collect data in this study.

The next issue that might be discussed is methodology, which shows how teachers'/students' perspectives of classroom participation are analysed. Some studies (e.g., Gass and Mackey, 2000) relied typically on 'stimulated recall', recording a lesson and consequently asking students to comment on their own participation after watching the video. Although this method enables the analyst to access students' comments and evaluations of their own performance, it constitutes a social situation that is very different from the recorded lesson. This method of analysing data can clearly be considered as a social situation in its own right. However, other studies (such as Mehan 1979 and Seedhouse 2004) have employed audio and/or video recordings to capture and analyse classroom interaction as students participate 'in situ'. Also Goodwin (1984) stated that participants' perspectives should not be obtained by asking relevant questions, but by conducting a deep analysis of the action as talk is ongoing (p. 243). Following this line of thought, student participation in this study is explored in relation to the social actions performed by students in their classrooms.

Furthermore, the data in this study are analysed in terms of the social interaction in EFL classrooms, rather than in relation to learning and pedagogy. Although English is the primary target in EFL lessons, pedagogical concepts are not approached as theoretical constructs, but with reference to interactional situations. Classroom interaction is basically considered as a



social situation rather than as the consequence of a particular pedagogical theory or method (see, e.g., Seedhouse, 1997; Firth and Wagner, 1997; Evaldsson et al., 2001). In this respect, the present study does not only provide a discussion about how student participation can be analysed and related to classroom interaction and foreign/second language pedagogy. It also highlights questions that are of practical concern for foreign/second language teachers. Therefore, instead of focusing on the process of learning the language and its content, this study empirically tries to describe the interactional practices through institutional and pedagogical situations. It is hoped that the findings of the study will encourage researchers within the field of foreign/second language classroom interaction and pedagogy to conduct the relevant discussions and reach constructive conclusions about how student participation is organised in EFL classroom activities.

## **7. Outline of the Study**

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The main purpose of chapters 1 to 4 is to provide a detailed description of the theoretical and methodological background of student participation. The subsequent chapters then constitute the empirical and analytical part of the thesis. In this way, the initial chapters provide conceptual discussion and explain the methodological approach upon which this study is based while the other chapters present the data and analysis used in the research as well as discussions of the findings and the conclusions obtained in this study.

This chapter has provided a brief background of the research problem and the purpose of the thesis. It also describes the context of the study and introduces the research questions. Chapter two provides an overview describing how classroom participation has been approached and studied in the foreign/second language classroom literature. It discusses the turn-by-turn method which describes participation from the participants' own perspective. This type of description includes not only verbal talk, but also different variables such as the embodied actions which students perform when participating in classroom interaction. Chapters three and four explore the methodology of this study. Chapter three explains the epistemological and methodological principles of conversation analysis (CA). It describes the basic stages of data collection and analysis from the CA perspective, discussing the theoretical background in sociology and ethnomethodology. However, chapter four is concerned with research methods and design used in the present study. It describes the procedures followed for data collection and data

analysis in this study. Chapters five and six are devoted to data analysis. In chapter five the focus is on embodied action, while chapter six provides the analysis of desk-talk employed by students to be participated in ongoing talk. Chapter seven provides a discussion of the main findings obtained from the analytical chapters '5 and 6'. Chapter eight proceeds to answer the research questions and presents the conclusions, including the main contribution and pedagogical implications of this study and suggestions for further research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Chapter two provides an overview of how classroom participation has been approached in the foreign/second language classroom literature. This chapter also describes participation from the participants' own perspectives and explains how student participation is related to classroom interaction in various ways. This discussion involves not only verbal engagement, but also other means of student participation such as embodied action which students rely on, as the chapter will argue, when participating in classroom interaction.

## **1. Introduction**

As has become clear in the previous chapter, it seems that student participation needs to be studied more and little research has been done on how students actually contribute in classroom interaction. Some issues related to classroom participation have been studied like, for example, the effect of the teacher's gender on student behaviour (Howard and Henney, 1998), the instructor's reflections on student responses (Dallimore et al., 2004), the teacher's use of questioning (Gayle et al., 2006), and factors influencing oral classroom participation (Lee, 2009). All of these studies have investigated the importance of oral participation and how teachers encourage this type of participation. However, scant research has been carried out which examines the other modes of participation such as body movements and non-oral behaviour in the entire classroom when conversations are going on. Although the nature of classroom interaction has recently become the focus of many researchers and linguists, both in terms of teacher-student and student-student interaction (McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979; van Lier, 1984; Seedhouse, 2004), most of these studies have mainly concerned with explicit oral interaction. However, other practices performed by teachers and students in the classroom are designed through the use of other resources such as embodied actions. This study, thus, seeks to address an important gap in the literature by looking at how all students can be involved in classroom discussion using different forms of classroom participation.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, despite the prevailing view that student participation in language classrooms is highly desirable, there are few

explanations of why and/or how opportunities for student participation should be provided. A brief discussion of various types of student participation is given below, with special consideration given to learning theories relating to classroom interaction. As mentioned above, while student participation is highly desirable in the classroom, there is little agreement on what kind of participation is organised by students themselves during the accomplishment of the classroom lesson. Furthermore, the quality of participation is sometimes different from one setting to another. For example, students in large classes may engage in different types of participation from those in pairs and small groups. Therefore, the nature of student participation should be considered as relating to classroom interaction using a variety of perspectives. With this in mind, student participation should be approached from an *etic* perspective, which can provide a framework for explaining its relation to classroom interaction in different ways (see section ... , chapter for more details). Also, it should be approached from an *emic* perspective, which leads to the method adopted in the empirical part of this study. The following review of student participation is thus broken down into two major sections: studies on student participation in relation to learning and classroom interaction, and studies on student participation itself.

## **2. Language Learning and Classroom Participation**

Classroom participation represents both a theoretical concern for researchers and a practical anxiety for teachers within foreign/second language pedagogy. As with theories of second language acquisition, second language pedagogy has explained how students can be participated in classroom activities using

several teaching methods such as *audio-lingual method* and *communicative language teaching*. Such methods may produce different sorts of student participation because, for example, participating in language drills is not like in small group activity. Nevertheless, participation in the classroom is an essential part of language learning and students must engage in classroom activities in order to learn the foreign/second language. This assumption is explicitly formulated in learning theories such as *learning by doing* (Dewey, 1997 [1938]) and *legitimate peripheral participation* (Lave and Wenger, 1991). The assumption that students should be included and engaged in teaching and learning activities can also be found in pedagogical applications, for example in *communicative language teaching* and *task-based language teaching* (see, e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Moreover, the relationship between participation and learning, which seems to be associated to each other in several aspects, has been investigated in various studies (such as Firth and Wagner, 1997, 1998, 2007; Long, 1997; Mondada and Pekarek-Doehler, 2004).

Classroom participation has also been studied from psychological and sociolinguistic perspectives in order to describe *why* students can or cannot participate in their classes. Such studies have found that social factors such as the age, gender and culture of teachers and students (Fassinger, 1995), and organisational factors such as class size and curriculum (Howard et al., 1996) may affect classroom participation. These studies have been criticised by different researchers, however, because they focus on the factors mentioned above as explanations of student participation rather than

analysing student participation itself.

However, another type of research (e.g., Mehan, 1979; Sahlström, 1999) has been conducted on *how* students participate in their classrooms. Here, classroom participation has been described in terms of its social organisation. As Mehan (1979) states, “to understand how so-called input factors like social class, ethnicity, or teachers’ attitudes influence educational outcomes, then their influence must be shown to operate in the course of interaction among participants” (p.5). According to this perspective, classroom interaction represents the process through which teaching and learning are achieved (see, e.g., Hall, 2002; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006). This type of research follows the tradition of a naturalistic approach to classroom interaction, considering the classroom as a social and cultural setting and employing ethnographic observations and audio/video recordings.

Following this line of research which describes student participation in its own right through ethnographic observation, this study looks at how participation is organised within the time span of the classroom lesson. Before looking at how student participation is organised, it is necessary to explain what EFL students actually need to know in order to participate appropriately in their classrooms (Bloome et al., 2005). For example, Johnson (1995) points out, students need a degree of knowledge and competence to participate in, learn about and acquire a second language (p. 160). This knowledge, as Mortensen (2008) states, contains functional, social and interactional norms, and it can be analysed in terms of how the participants orient to the ongoing activity while classroom interaction proceeds (p. 11). Since this necessary knowledge



for classroom participation can be seen clearly in and through the organisation of classroom interaction, the structure of this interaction needs to be studied in some detail.

Furthermore, as indicated in the previous chapter, in contexts such as Libya where English is taught as a foreign language, the classroom is the only place where students can learn the language and interact in English with the other students around them. In this case, understanding the opportunities for student participation in and through the organisation of classroom interaction in such contexts is also needed. Thus, the following sections are devoted to the organisation of classroom interaction.

### **3. Classroom Interaction**

The literature on classroom interaction is extensive, and this review therefore focuses on research on the organisation of classroom discourse which relates to student participation and particularly in EFL discourse characteristic of teacher-fronted activity. Several foundational studies are explored below, along with more recent investigations into the organisation of classroom interaction. It is important firstly to indicate that, although many studies have explored classroom interaction in various countries where English is taught as first/second language, little or no research has tackled this subject in the Libyan context. Aldabbus (2008) recently confirmed this point in his research on the impact of language games on classroom interaction in Libyan EFL primary classrooms. Despite extensive literature searches using educational, linguistic and psychological databases as well as conference papers,

Aldabbus did not find any published research relating to classroom interaction in Libya. The only reference which related to this issue was a (UNESCO, 2002) report which stated the Libyan students who learn EFL are not given opportunities for interaction in the classroom (p. 24). Therefore, research is needed to find out more about the Libyan context which represents (one of) examples of EFL contexts. To begin the discussion, the term 'classroom interaction' is defined. Then, the nature of classroom interaction as well as the major factors affecting this nature is described, and finally the relationship between classroom interaction and student participation is explored.

### **3. 1. Definition of classroom interaction**

It seems to be very difficult to identify exactly what classroom interaction is, due to the various forms it might take. A review of the literature reveals many different definitions of classroom interaction. For example, Johnson (1995) describes classroom interaction as explicit behaviour and language learning in the classroom which determines the students' learning opportunities and use of the target language. Classroom interaction can also be described as the process in which students are exposed to the target language and therefore how different language samples become available for students to use in the classroom in an interactive way. Alexander (2000) defines interaction as "an exchange containing either a complex initiation-response-feedback/follow-up (IRF) sequence as described by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) or a partial, initiation-response (IR) one" (p. 379). Therefore, classroom interaction can be categorised in different ways depending on how interaction is examined. For example, responding to questions can be contrasted with acting out a

dialogue; and choral repetition with eliciting. All examples of classroom interaction may affect language learning and therefore need to be researched. Although there is no general agreement upon a particular definition of classroom interaction, because it includes a variety of forms, it is clear that classroom interaction generally refers to any interaction which takes place between the teacher and students and amongst students themselves. Since most Libyan classroom interaction is restricted to teacher-student interaction rather than amongst students themselves (see, e.g., Aldabbus, 2008, p. 26), the present study aims to describe the interaction that occurs amongst students in classrooms as well as that which takes place between the teacher and students. This is when participants are led by the teacher who tries to facilitate the process of participation by providing students with appropriate opportunities. These opportunities may also be provided by other students as they work collaboratively, assisting each other in their classrooms. In order to fully describe classroom interaction, a closer look at how participation is organised by the students themselves is needed. Classroom interaction, thus, means not only the activity that students engage in, but also all of the participation patterns they adopt.

### **3. 2. Patterns of classroom Interaction**

Since student participation is considered as part of classroom interaction, the analysis of this participation should take into account the range of actions that take place in the classroom. Some studies have indicated that classroom interaction does not contain random acts and events, but has its own patterns (van Lier, 1988). For example, Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) study collected

data from traditional school classrooms in the UK and revealed one of the most characteristic findings concerning classroom interaction patterns. It was found that, when teachers and students talk, they often follow a general pattern of three steps in sequence: initiation, response and feedback/evaluation (IRF/E).

### **3. 2. 1. IRF/E sequences**

This format of IRF/E sequences seems to be widely followed as a general pattern of classroom interaction where the teacher initiates an action, the student responds and the teacher comments on or evaluates the answer. In fact, there is no agreement even upon the particular terms appropriate for this format because, for instance, Bellack et al. (1966) have documented it in terms of *soliciting*, *responding* and *reacting moves*. Then, it has been described in a variety of ways, such as teacher initiation, student response and teacher feedback (IRF) (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) (Mehan, 1979) and question-answer-comment sequences (McHoul, 1978; Markee, 2000). In this general format, however, students are expected to participate briefly in providing answers, which are then evaluated by the teacher with phrases such “Good”, “That’s right”, or “No, that’s not right” (Hall and Walsh, 2002). This cycle of IRF/E may have the advantage that the teacher can check students’ comprehension, and students can obtain immediate feedback (Candlin and Mercer, 2001). Several studies have also associated student learning to the sequential IRF/E pattern (see, e.g., Hall, 1997; Wells, 1993). It has been found that the IRF/E format enhances student learning, while the type of initiating action by the teacher

may limit the students' opportunities to learn. Bloome et al. (2005) argue that the IRF/E format describes a sequential structure but does not explain the actions that the moves accomplish. Therefore, since this IRF/E format has been described as responses to the teacher's actions, student participation is constrained by the teacher's initiating move.

In his book entitled *The Interactional Architecture of the Language Classroom: A Conversation Analysis Perspective*, Seedhouse (2004) criticizes the simplistic discourse analysis of this format of classroom interaction, confirming that

“although it could at first sight be mistaken for a rigid, plodding, lockstep IRF/IRE cycle sequence in which everything is planned and predictable, the interaction is in fact dynamic, fluid, and locally managed on a turn-by-turn basis to a considerable extent.” (p. 62).

He also finds that “the IRF/IRE cycles perform different interactional and pedagogical work according to the context in which they are operating” (p. 63). That is, the IRF/E pattern does not describe the interactional work that the format achieves and it remains merely a description of a kind of sequential organisation. The IRF/E structure has been also criticized from a communicative language teaching perspective for providing students with limited opportunities for participation and initiating action (Cazden, 2001; van Lier, 2001).

Arminen (2005) indicates that, while dealing exclusively with the IRF/E format from a communicative rather than a pedagogical perspective, this pattern “forms the basic module for the maintenance of intersubjective understanding”

(p.124). This has been also criticized by Seedhouse (2004) when he points out that description of the IRF/E format is linked to the analytic assumption that participants make only one move at a time where each turn performs one action (p. 57). In this way, he proposes instead that student participation should be analysed by describing in detail the moment-to-moment actions of participants themselves (see also, e.g., Markee, 2000; Hellermann, 2005). Following this perspective, this study looks at the participants' actions by analysing moment-to-moment actions rather than describing only the sequential structures. It describes the movements and students' actions employed for classroom participation by analysing talk in classroom interaction.

### **3. 2. 2. Turn-taking and classroom interaction**

As indicated in the above section, the organisation of turn-taking in classroom interaction is very important in understanding student participation. It is relevant, therefore, to show how turn-taking has been dealt with in different studies. The initial study on turn-taking within classroom interaction was documented as early as the 1970s. In their seminal paper "A Simplest Systematics for the Organisation of Turn-Taking for Conversation", Sacks et al. (1974) describe the basic organisation of turn-taking among speakers. They note that in the overwhelming majority of cases one party speaks at a time and the transition between participants is performed with only brief pauses or overlaps. In order to explain how this occurs, they describe the linguistic and social components involved and some other rules that combine them. The linguistic component describes *turn-constructive units* (TCUs)

ranging from a single word to a full sentence. However, the social components describe how transition between speakers is organised. Lerner (2003) illustrates that either the current speaker selects the next-speaker or the next speaker self-selects. The rules that combine these two components are also related to the organisation of turn-taking within conversation (for more details, see Sacks et al., 1974, pp. 702-4).

Following Sacks et al.'s (1974) paper, McHoul takes their study up in his article "*The Organisation of Turns at Formal Talk in the Classroom*" (McHoul, 1978). However, McHoul describes turn-taking organisation in teacher-fronted plenary interaction. He depends in his study on recordings from an English comprehensive school rather than foreign/second language classrooms. Therefore, unlike foreign/second language classrooms, the focus of the lesson may not be on the language that is used. McHoul found that in formal talk in the classroom students had different participation rights. More recently, turn-taking has been described by CA researchers in foreign/second language classrooms (see, e.g., Markee, 2000; Seedhouse, 2004; Hellermann, 2005). They provide very important modifications to Sacks et al.'s analysis. For instance, Markee (2000) notes a number of important points in traditional classrooms, such as: **a)** multi unit turns by teachers; **b)** a high frequency of choral talk; **c)** a high degree of the pre-allocation of turns; **d)** students are often required to generate elaborated, sentence-length turns; **e)** fixed timing of lessons, and **f)** the predetermination of lesson content in the form of the lesson plan. However, Mortensen (2008) argues that such patterns "do not describe all language classroom contexts, nor are they specifically related to

classrooms” (p. 20). He also shows how turns are not completely related to classroom interaction when they are produced chorally (see also Lerner, 2002; Margutti, 2006).

Another figure in the field of CA is Seedhouse, who shows that turn-taking is organised differently depending on the pedagogical activities, such as “*form-and-accuracy, meaning-and-fluency, tasks and procedural contexts*”, (2004, p. 101). This means that turn-taking in the classroom is associated with the pedagogical aims, and when they change turn-taking changes accordingly. Therefore, since turn-taking depends on the teacher’s pedagogical aim, student participation in classroom interaction may be restricted to providing short answers during *form-and-accuracy* contexts, or turn-taking may be organised on a moment-to-moment basis during *meaning-and-fluency contexts*.

Within these different studies discussed above, a number of figures appear to hold different points of view on Sacks et al.’s study regarding turn-taking. Among those figures are McHoul, Markee and Seedhouse. The turn-taking is also described as the “machinery” (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) underlying the microanalysis of turn-taking in classroom interaction. From a CA perspective, participants collaboratively create their interaction to display their formative orientation embedded within and manifest through talk in interaction. However, the methodological issue of turn-taking organisation, which is a central finding of social interaction, is discussed in detail later within the methodology of Conversation Analysis (CA).



### 3. 2. 3. Turn-allocation in classroom interaction

Turn-allocation has been widely dealt with by researchers to illustrate its importance in classroom interaction. For example, in an examination of the IRF/E sequence previously identified in Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) work, Mehan (1979) describes the nature of turn-allocation in the classroom, including the rights of students to contribute during teacher-fronted activity. He argues that a contribution by students is not successfully incorporated into the ongoing activity unless they master three things: *getting the floor*, *holding the floor* and *introducing news* (pp. 139-140). By accomplishing these three things, students will effectively participate in the lesson by knowing "with whom, when, and where they can speak and act" (p. 133). This highlights the importance of students' interactional/communicative competence in the classroom setting.

In contrast, McHoul (1978) assumes that "only teachers can direct speakership in any creative way" (p. 188). Therefore, students are only allowed to participate according to the teacher's nomination or invitation for a turn-at-talk through, for example, raising hands (Sahlström, 1999). In this way, student access to the entire interaction is limited and student self-selection occurs with a "low incidence" (see, e.g., Jordan, 1990, p. 1154). Nevertheless, in her study of Spanish as a foreign language classrooms, Jordan (1990) found that students used discourse markers such as *pero* (but) and *entonces* (then) to initiate self-selected turns.

Sahlström (1999, 2002) states that self-selection can be seen to be a turn-allocation device which provides opportunities for some students to participate in the ongoing interaction. At the same time, he notes that self-selection excludes others from participating in the plenary interaction (1999, pp. 123-4). More specifically, organising and managing classrooms in order to provide students with opportunities for self-selection constrains or makes smaller the possibilities for some students to participate in. Mortensen confirms that:

“when the classroom is organised to allow the students to self-select and manage the ongoing task, only few students seem to self-select, and thus take the opportunity for participating in the way that is facilitated by the teacher”. (Mortensen 2008, p. 22)

Furthermore, Paoletti and Fele (2004) describe the teacher allocation of turns as two sides of the same coin. They found that, although the teacher employs turn-allocation for maintaining order in the classroom and to guarantee equal participation, their control over turn taking leads to constraining student participation (p. 78). Turn-allocation strategies thus provide as well as constrain opportunities for students to engage in classroom interaction, and these different opportunities can be described and analysed in terms of participation.

To sum up, these studies on classroom interaction provide a general background of research into student participation and its different structures which can be derived from the goals of analysis. As discussed above, turn-taking, turn-allocation and IRF/E sequences can be analysed to describe student participation in classroom interaction. These patterns can show how interaction unfolds on a moment-to-moment basis, primarily focusing on

verbal talk. However, this prompts questions of how non-speaking students participate in the ongoing activity when the classroom is organised to allow for one speaker to talk at a time, especially in teacher-fronted classes. Here it may be more accurate to look at students' actions during classroom talk, which may include non-verbal acts as well as implicit desk-talk in order to describe classroom participation. The following section of this review, therefore, considers different types of participation including verbal and non-verbal engagements that students perform during classroom interaction. This might eventually help us determine the theoretical framework and to adopt a suitable method of analysis for the present study.

#### **4. Classroom Participation**

It is not easy to identify what participation in the classroom is, and thus it is difficult to measure and assess objectively (Peterson, 2001). Classroom participation is about "involvement matters" and is usually a concern to both instructors and students (Weaver and Qi, 2005). Students can benefit a lot from participating actively in classroom discussion, and it seems that the more students actively participate in the learning process the more they learn. In addition, active classroom participation plays an important role in improving the process of education as well as students' personal development (Tatar, 2005). Participation enables students to achieve their aims by active interaction rather than merely being passive listeners.

Participation can be looked at from various different angles. For instance, Fritschner (2000) indicates that participation is defined in different ways by

instructors and students. While instructors define participation as oral, students' opinions are more diverse and they cite a variety of non-oral features (Dallimore et al., 2004). This implies that classroom participation might enable students to improve not only their speaking skills but also non-oral and social skills. Furthermore, students often display their willingness to participate in oral discussion, but opportunities are not adequately available for all students due to some issues related to classroom context, including time allotted for teaching and teacher-fronted activities.

On the other hand, while classroom interaction has been studied by some researchers and linguists interested in the relationship between teachers and learners (Walsh, 2002; Seedhouse, 1996; Johnson, 1995) and by those interested in the effects of participatory structures such as task-based work (Jenks, 2007; Ellis, 2003; Robinson, 2001), these studies have mainly focused on verbal participation. Much remains to be learned about the micro-interactional practices used by language learners in classroom work as part of an overall understanding of how they participate through a range of embodied actions. Yet the relevance of this study is not limited to the explicit talk of language-learners in their classrooms. Student participation analysed in this study is concerned more generally with embodied actions and also with implicit desk-talk employed by students in classroom interaction.

#### **4. 1. The concept of participation in this study**

Based on the above discussion, the present study aims to extend existing knowledge about student participation by describing what is actually going on

in classroom discussion. Although, oral engagement can be considered the main basic indicator of student participation, many students choose not to participate orally during classroom discussions. Thus, the main focus of this study is to describe the other types of student participation in classroom discussions.

According to the present author's experience as a teacher, when EFL learners are prompted to speak, answer questions or give comments on their responses, they sometimes speak altogether and give answers as a group. Furthermore, they are not only orally participating but are also non-orally constructing a kind of group participation through distributing meaningful signals. That is; in addition to their speaking, they are gazing, smiling, nodding heads and glancing at each other during discussion in the classroom. In this way, achieving participation in the classroom relies not only on the ability to participate orally, but also non-orally using different signals of embodied action. Therefore, this study examines the role that human action plays in achieving classroom participation, including how the entire classroom can be involved in a discussion at the same time. It also includes the analysis of student-student talk (desk-talk) occurring beyond discussion between the teacher and students, which is also exploited by language learners as a mode of understanding the ongoing activity. The results obtained by this analysis will provide evidence of the extent to which such embodied action and desk-talk are exploited by EFL learners in participating in their classrooms.

Thus, this study attempts to describe the process of participation employed by the entire class as discussion continues. It aims to display the role of embodied action during ongoing discussion as well as student-student talk (desk-talk) which also occurs during the ongoing discussion, but behind the scenes in the classroom.

#### **4. 2. Participation and/in classroom activity**

Classroom participation can be looked at according to the interactional activity which occurs. Researchers are often interested in analysing classroom participation for educational reasons related to the teacher's teaching and the students' learning. Sometimes they deal with student participation in a single interactional activity with only two participating parties: the teacher and the class. In this case, classroom interaction is analysed as two-party participation occurring between the teacher and any student. Studies which are especially interested in such interaction between the teacher and students have become *classics* in this field (e.g., Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; McHoul, 1978; Mehan 1979). However, as cited in (Koole, 2007, p. 487), other studies treat the students as one party to the interaction, focusing on participation in classroom interaction as a social and communicative process (Castanheira et al., 2001). Here, student participation is described as student behaviour during a single teacher-student activity (e.g., Green et al., 1988). Also, studies of student-student participation are often interested in group assignments rather than looking at students who talk together while the teacher is teaching (Tuyay et al., 1995; Ford, 1999). This perspective on participation in classroom interaction is confirmed by researchers to be as a one-at-a-time and two-party

activity (see, e.g., Cazden, 1988; Hicks, 1995; Mehan, 1998; Koole, 2007).

However, participation in the classroom can be found in *multiparty activities* which are concerned with simultaneously occurring teacher-student and student-student talk. Researchers describing interaction as a multiparty activity explore the organisation of classroom interaction in more than one activity (see, e.g., Bloome and Theodorou, 1988; Sahlström, 1999; Jones and Thornborrow, 2004; Rampton, 2006). For instance, Sahlström (1999) analysed in detail the manner in which students deviated their talk from the teacher to other students. He used CA methodology to analyse whether the multiparty classroom interaction in which students were participated in was always the same or broken up into several interactions, as in “*schisming*” (Egbert, 1997; see also Koole, 2007, p. 488; and Sacks et al. 1974, pp. 713-714). Rampton (2006) explained in detail how participants may withdraw from interaction with the teacher into “*private speech*”.

Such studies highlight the fact that when the teacher addresses the class as whole, students may not pay attention as a whole. In this way, students may participate in teacher-fronted activities in ways, which do not involve the teacher directly (see also Koole, 2007 p. 488). Participation in multiparty activity is thus more complex than that in two party interaction because it is not easy to identify who is the present speaker or the primary recipient, and if they are participated in the same interaction. Kendon (1990 [1985]) also encapsulated this complexity in multiparty activity and interaction in the questions: “how can the speaker know that his intended recipient is ready to

receive his utterance, and how do the other participants know for whom the utterance is intended?" (p. 242).

In his collection of papers republished in *Conducting Interaction*, Kendon, (1990b, 1990 [1970], 1990 [1985],) describes how people are participating in interaction through "*transactional segment*" in which their body orientation is shown. By transactional segment he means that the lower part of the body shows the participant's enduring display of engagement. Kendon argues that people are able to twist independently around the same vertical axis using different parts of their bodies. Although the eyes are more flexible in allowing participants to turn towards an immediate focus of attention, the lower part of the body displays a more enduring orientation. In this way, participants in the classroom may orient the lower parts of their bodies to the same direction (e.g., towards the teacher) even while they turn to address the student sitting in the next seat or even in the row behind them.

Within this perspective, Schegloff (1998) employs Kendon's idea of transactional segments to analyse how participants are able to project 'TCU' completions through body orientation. If student participation involves body orientation, participants' whole bodies should be included in the analysis of student participation in the classroom. Although few studies of classroom interaction follow this perspective, much remains to be learned about how students participate through a range of embodied action. The huge volume of classroom interaction research refers almost exclusively to verbal talk when referring to student participation. For this reason, Lazaraton (2004) asks why



SLA studies do not highlight nonverbal activities (p. 80). In fact, some studies do deal with visual and multimodal features from different perspectives. For example, researchers have analysed nonverbal aspects in terms of social semiotics (Kress and Leeuwen, 2001; Bourne and Jewitt, 2003), socio-cultural perspectives (McCafferty, 2002), and cognitive functions (Gullberg, 2006a; Gullberg, 2006b) as well as by using CA (Szymanski, 1999; Sahlström, 1999; Mortensen, 2008). However, these represent only a small number of studies in this field.

The present study looks at nonverbal aspects of student participation in EFL classrooms from a CA perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to review how previous studies which adopt CA methodology analyse these aspects. Mortensen's (2008) research is one of the CA studies on classroom interaction which deals with visual aspects of student participation. He describes how student participation can be understood from the participants' own perspective in Danish as second language classrooms, and how the teacher facilitates this participation through their instructions. Mortensen indicates that students display a strong interactional awareness, and they orient to the teacher's turn-design which provides a coherent and relevant next move (2008, p. 188).

Sahlström's (1999) study of participation in Swedish comprehensive school classrooms reveals the multimodal resources that students rely on to participate. He analysed how students employ self-selection and hand-raising to display participation in plenary interaction. Sahlström found that while self-

selection is more effective than hand-raising in giving students a good chance to take turns, it constrains the participation of classmates because only one student is normally allowed to talk at a time. He showed that students participate differently in plenary interaction because they have different understandings of the ongoing activity (see also Ohta, 2001; Hall, 2002). Further research in other social contexts and languages as well as different modes of classroom organisation is thus needed to look at these visual aspects. It is hoped that the present research on university students learning English as a foreign language in Libya will contribute to this discussion.

#### **4. 3. Participation and embodied action**

Embodied action reveals the resources that people rely on in their social lives to participate in different situations. Because action is accomplished through the interplay between speakers, it is more convenient to describe talk according to accompanied signals (see, e.g., Stivers and Sidnell, 2005). This perspective provides another way to analyse participation in classroom interaction. For instance, several studies have explained how gaze (e.g., Goodwin, 1981; Goodwin, 1994; Goodwin, 2001; Kidwell, 1997, 2005; Robinson, 1998; Lerner, 2003; Carroll, 2004; Haddington, 2006), gestures (e.g., Schegloff, 1984a; Streeck, 1993, 1994; Goodwin, 2000b; Goodwin, 2003b; Mondada, 2007), physical objects in the surroundings (e.g., Heath and Luff, 1992a; 1992b; Rae, 2001; Goodwin, 2002; Hindmarsh and Heath, 2003; Nevile, 2004), and body posture (e.g., Heath, 1986; Schegloff, 1998; Szymanski, 1999; Goodwin, 2000a, 2003c) are employed by participants as resources for social actions which contribute to the interactions they are

involved in. Analysing of such these visual resources may help researchers to understand how participants organise their participation in ongoing activities, and how they orient to the interactions which they are participating in.

#### **4. 4. Participation and the organisation of interaction**

Participation in the classroom occurs in several ways depending on how interaction is organised. The importance of associating classroom interaction with participant organisation has been highlighted by previous studies (see, e.g., McKay, 1994; Watanabe and Swain, 2007). For instance, the significance of interaction for learning produced in pairs and groups is supported by two different theories of language learning: sociocultural theory based on the work of Vygotsky (1978) and the psycholinguistic theory of interaction built on the work of Long (1983). More specifically, group work creates a positive and relaxed learning environment in which the anxiety that prevents students from speaking up in front of their classmates may be reduced (see, e.g., Foster, 1998). Since students in group work have more opportunities to participate in oral discussion and can provide explanations to each other, silent learners may be encouraged to participate more easily (Brumfit, 1984; Pica and Doughty, 1985a; Gutierrez, 2008). On the other hand, working in pairs has also been looked at by researchers. Swain and Lapkin (2000), for example, asked students in a French immersion class to take notes while they listen, and then working in pairs to rewrite the provided passage. They found that while students participated in such communicative tasks, they successfully supported each other in providing information about language structures and corrective feedback (see also Lightbown and Spada, 2006). Moreover, Walsh

(2006) states that learners in different contexts may learn better from collaborative dialogue where they can co-construct knowledge by supporting each other with the necessary linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge by correcting each other, solving problems, and assisting each other to be engaged actively (see also Watanabe and Swain, 2007).

However, research on the pedagogical value of collaborative learning in pair and group work is scarce in EFL contexts such as in Libya because of the large numbers of students in classrooms where students are often led by the teacher and sit in rows facing the board and work individually (see, e.g., Aldabbus, 2008, p. 45). Furthermore, research on classroom interaction reveals that participants often do not work as groups even though they sit together in pairs or groups. For example, Seedhouse (1999) indicates that participants may concentrate on the completion of the task rather than providing the necessary linguistic output to develop it. In this way, participants need to be aware of the purpose of the task and what is expected of them from the beginning in order to achieve its goals and work together collaboratively (see, e.g., Galton and Williamson, 1992; Candlin and Mercer, 2001).

Another situation in which interaction occurs in the classroom is teacher-fronted organisation. Several studies have used the terms *Traditional teacher-fronted* or *Traditional teacher-directed* to describe classroom discourse without providing descriptions of the discourse itself (see, e.g., Tenenbergh, 1988; Bannick, 2002; Mori, 2004). These phrases have come to be

understood as shorthand for the type of interaction found by Sinclair and Coulthard in 1975. McHoul's (1978) early investigation of turn-taking in classrooms reinforced the conception of teacher-fronted activity as teacher-controlled, which reduces the opportunities for student participation. His study revealed that in teacher-fronted classrooms no other parties except teachers have the right to self-select as first-starters (p. 192). He claimed that when such an action occurs, that is, if other parties self-select to participate; this cannot be "accounted for" in the turn-taking mechanism (p.197). By examining a student selecting another student as the next speaker in "the apparatus for turn-taking", McHoul found that "this would involve enforcing an entirely different speech exchange system" for classrooms in this setting (p. 208). Also, the description of teacher-fronted activity introduced by McHoul (1978) and others (see, e.g., Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) may be associated with the age of participants as well as the turn-taking patterns which represent oral participation. However, nonverbal patterns and desk-talk in teacher-fronted activity in adult classrooms may be quite different. Accordingly, the present study aims to uncover different types of student participation in different settings. The focus is primarily on the entire classroom, including different activities which may provide opportunities to understand the nature of interaction in EFL classrooms, and thus to describe whether it entails several types of student participation.

After analysing talk in small group work, Bannick (2002) examines the nature of teacher-fronted activity and found that:

“the teacher is in control of the lesson agenda, and the organisation of turns and activities. She initiates tasks and allocates and evaluates pupil turns. Students on the other hand do not have the right to speak up in class unless they are invited to do so by the teacher.” (p. 270)

He argued that teacher-fronted activity “results in little opportunity for individual students to practice their oral language skills, and does not create affordances for conversational interactions” (p. 271). Bannick concluded that such settings are similarly not conducive to conversational interaction because participation taking place within the larger classroom frame cannot be “conversational”. According to these viewpoints on classroom organisation, students may participate in classroom interaction as individuals and/or as groups.

#### **4. 4. 1. Individual and group participation**

The distinction between student participation as individuals and the participation of individual students as a part of the collective group has been made in CA research to differentiate between a participant and a party. Researchers have found that interaction may consist of several participants who act as one speaking party (see, e.g., Goodwin, 1984; Lerner, 1993; Schegloff, 1995). For instance, in forms of choral response, Lerner (1993, 1995, 2002) shows how a speaker can design turns so as to provide for “conjoined participation” by several speakers in the next turn. While some studies claim that the teacher handles students as a collective party (see, e.g., Payne and Hustler, 1980), other researchers believe that the collective speaking party “does not seem to facilitate equity in any straightforward way” (Sahlström, 1999, p. 91). This difference in perspective represents an

important challenge for teachers and students in relation to student participation. For example, Hammersley (1990) indicates that student participation depends on the teacher's questions, which may create the problem of making students compete to answer at the same time, especially in large classes (p. 16). In this way, the teacher may consider individual students for displaying participation rather than the collective groups. Moreover, the participation of the single student may constrain the participation of other students. Therefore, as cited in Mortensen (2008), Sahlström (1999) found in his study on student hand-raising as a way of displaying participation that student participation should be analysed in relation to the actions of the teacher as well as in relation to the other students (p. 30).

It is very important therefore to concentrate on the plenary classroom interaction which represents the actions of the teachers as well as students in order to show the complexity that characterises the classroom. More specifically, focusing only on the actions of the teacher does not allow for an understanding of the complexity of the students' participation. This represents a single multiparty interaction between the teacher and the students where classroom interaction is understood differently from participant to participant (see, e.g., Green et al., 1988). However, research on the actions of students (see, e.g., Philips, 1972; Bloome and Theodorou, 1988; Ohta, 2000) provides another dynamic window into classroom interaction, and a range of studies conducted from a CA perspective reveal the complexity of classroom interaction as a multimodal site for social action (see, e.g., Markee, 2000; Mori

2002; Szymanski, 2003; Seedhouse, 2004; Mondada and Pekarek-Doehler, 2004; Kasper, 2004; Macbeth, 2004; Koole, 2007; Hellermann, 2007). For instance, in his paper 'The Organization of Off-task Talk in Second Language Classrooms, Markee (2005b) used CA to investigate how 'off-task' talk is constructed by second/foreign language (S/FL) learners during small group work. He found that participants are off-task when they are in the boundaries between the activities provided; and they orient to these activities when the teacher is included in the interaction.

In order to describe the social organisation of the classroom and how participants do/do not orient to ongoing activities, the complexity of the classroom interaction should be dealt with when the teacher is/is not participating in this interaction. Also the actions of both the teacher and the students may form a complex set of interrelated actions which may lead students to display different modes of participation during ongoing interaction. Therefore, this study looks at how student participation is organised in ongoing activities both during and beyond classroom discussions with the teacher.

#### **4. 5. Types of participation**

As can be seen in the previous section, the general pattern of classroom participation seems to be mainly verbal, because oral participation can be considered the main basic indicator of student participation. In fact, there is no agreement upon the importance of particular types of classroom participation. Dallimore et al. (2004), for example, indicate that student participation means



more than speaking as it includes a variety of non-oral features (Fritschner, 2000). This means that classroom participation involves not only oral engagement but also non-oral meaningful acts related to the ongoing activity. Therefore, it is clear that students are engaged in classroom discussion through both oral and non-oral participation. Furthermore, sometimes the oral language uttered by students during the ongoing discussion is not used for classroom interaction, but for desk-talk provided by some students quietly behind the scene.

Another important approach to participation deals with it as graded participation. This type of participation is mainly depending on oral participation for classroom activities. In what follows, these types of classroom participation are explained, starting with the normal forms of oral and graded participation and then considering the other types of participation such as desk-talk and embodied action.

#### **4. 5. 1. Graded and oral participation**

Since graded participation requires oral engagement, students are assessed from their involvement in classroom discussion. Oral participation usually means students speaking in class, for example answering and asking questions, making comments, and joining in discussions. Students who do not participate in these ways are often considered to be passive and are not generally involved when participation is graded. However, Wood (1996) states that “a class participation requirement neither promotes participation nor does it effectively measure what a student learns in class”. She argues

that “we must get away from the false assumption that the amount one learns is directly connected to the amount one does (or does not) talk” (p. 111). This means that the evaluation of student participation should not be limited to oral interaction.

In fact, there may be many patterns of equitable classroom participation which do not necessarily mean that all students are expected to participate in the same way, or even to the same degree. Rather, the goal is to make sure that students are able to participate in ways that will help them achieve the learning goals, and that no one is prevented from participating in the classroom.

However, certain factors such as time constraints and class size may create classroom dynamics that discourage oral participation in teacher-fronted classes. For example, opportunities to speak may not be available for all students in large classes because time is limited and students may not be able to speak at the same time.

#### **4. 5. 2. Silent or non-oral participation**

As mentioned above, graded and oral participation strategies appear not to be relevant in large classes with limited time. Although silence and speech are both components of human communication, research on the role of silence in classroom participation has provides different perspectives. For example, Petress (2001) suggests that it is unethical for students to refuse to participate in their class. He claims that silence might negatively influence classroom

learning by reducing the teacher's effectiveness and students' benefits. Silence can thus be interpreted by teachers as a criticism of their teaching.

However, other studies indicate that silence in the classroom might be more effective in learning than oral participation, because it provides students with good listening, thinking and reflecting skills (Jaworski and Sachdev, 1998). They also state that students use silence as a "facilitative device ... to gain access, organise and absorb new material" (p. 286). In the light of these benefits and problems related to silence, it might be that although silent students do not meaningfully contribute orally to class discussions, they follow what is going on by producing embodied actions to show their reactions towards surrounding events, or by providing implicit oral utterances apart from the ongoing discussion as in desk-talk, discussed in detail later in chapter six.

#### **4. 5. 3. Classroom embodied action**

As mentioned above, the production of embodied action is very important in understanding the surrounding context. The term 'embodied action' means "a range of visible displays that contribute in some way to interaction, such as a hand or arm gesture, a head shake, a display of gaze direction" (Olsher, 2004, p. 223). Kendon (1990) also argues that these actions are very important in understanding how people's interactions are organized, and analysis of speaker's talk must include "where they look, when they speak or remain silent, how they move, how they manage their faces, how they orient to one another, and how they position themselves spatially" (p. 3). Most of these actions can be used in certain contexts to supply adequate responses

even without accompanying talk. For example, the gaze shift of hearer to speaker, when the latter calls the hearer's name can be an adequate answer without the need for words to be uttered. The data analysis in this study aims to identify how these action units are exploited by students to achieve classroom participation.

A number of studies have already been conducted which explore such embodied action in different research fields, including linguistics, sociology, anthropology and pragmatics. Olsher (2004), for instance, examined the 'embodied completions' of turn construction units among Japanese speakers. Goodwin (2000a) studied the construction of action through talk within situated interaction. Furthermore, some researchers have extended such investigation to other features of embodied action. These features include the relative timing of gestures and the utterances which they accompany (Schegloff, 1984b), and the use of facial manipulations and gestures in conjunction with assessments, including concurrent assessments (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987). Moreover, a large volume of research reveals that story telling and other kinds of multi-unit turns are not produced by the teller in isolation but are performed as social practice by all participants contributing to the telling process. For example, Goodwin (2006, 2007) and Goodwin and Goodwin (2005) have explained how story recipients provide visual responses to show that they are listening, and these signals are important for tellers.

However, some studies focusing on gestures have also been carried out in the field of education and classroom interaction. For example, Sime (2006)

studied the learner's perceptions of the use of gestures in the L2 classroom. Another study has offered taxonomies of classroom gestural behaviour as a view relating to teacher-training (Neill, 1991).

Among studies related to embodied action, different issues have been investigated within the domain of conversation analysis (Olsher, 2004, p. 222). The CA methodology used to investigate non-oral communication was first introduced by Charles Goodwin in cooperation with M. H. Goodwin, influenced by the work conducted by Adam Kendon and Ernest Goffman (ten Have, 1999, p. 52). They warn against the separation of interaction from embodied action and, more generally, Goodwin (2000, 2003) argued for the "analysis of interaction to take into account the physical surroundings, activities, participation frameworks and sequential actions in which they are embedded" (Olsher, 2004, p. 222). This type of research has used the CA methodology to deal with how participants employ their bodies to display and organise their participation. The findings reveal that, in addition to speaking to participate, participants are gazing, smiling, nodding their heads and glancing at each other during ongoing discussion. According to these studies which adopt the 'anthropological' approach using CA, participation in interaction relies on the ability to engage non-orally and by using different signals of embodied action, which are available as a good source of data for the analyst (see, e.g., Stivers and Sidnell, 2005). This line of research related to the organisation of participation follows Goffman's notion of the participation framework, in which participants employ such actions so as to be involved in interaction (Goffman, 1981 [1979]).

Goffman's notion of the participation framework deals with how participants in social encounters take up different roles within interaction (see Goffman, 1963a, 1967). He coined the terms 'production format' and 'participation framework' to describe the dynamic aspects of interaction and warned against the dualistic distinction between 'speaker' and 'hearer'. Goffman's participation framework introduced the roles of 'typology', which describe when the hearer can/cannot be the main addressee and/or a ratified participant. Goffman's (1981 [1979]) roles in participation include what is called 'footing', in which he identified the relationship between participants and how they display their participation and position in interaction. He indicated that a change in footing "implies a change in the alignment ... in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance" and a change in footing is "another way of talking about a change in our frames of events" (p. 128). Subsequent studies have adopted Goffman's framework as an analytical framework to analyse how participants display their understanding of the interaction, revealing that participation "is a demonstrative social role, where each kind of participant role requires a particular kind of appropriate display by its incumbent" (Levinson, 1988, p. 178).

On the other hand, participation has been considered by other researchers as sustained engagement in order to understand how people act as collaborative members of particular group (see, e.g., Irvine, 1996; Hanks, 1996; Goodwin and Goodwin 2005; Goodwin 2006). In this case, as Duranti (1997) claimed, looking at members within their groups means to understand "not only what one person says to another, but how speaking and non-speaking participants

coordinate their actions, including verbal actions” (p. 329). Within this view, researchers talk about an ‘ecology’ where participants coordinate with each other in a specific environment which produces social actions. For example, what is central to face-to-face interaction is:

“socially organized, interactively sustained configurations of multiple participants who use the public visibility of the actions being performed by each others’ bodies, the unfolding sequential organization of their talk and semiotic structure in the setting they inhabit to organize courses of action in concert with each other” (Goodwin 2000a: 1518).

Based on this perspective, participation includes not only the various resources people invoke, but also verbal talk as part of the conducting of social action. This suggests that understanding the properties of speech requires looking at the physical setting in which speakers translate their gestures. This cannot be fully described without looking at the extra-bodily environment where it occurs (Goffman, 1964, p. 134).

All of the embodied actions described in the previous studies have mainly been related to the ongoing verbal TCUs and their emergent construction. These embodied resources have thus exploited to participate in classroom discussion and taken place through the construction of participation framework. Such studies provide a general background of the different features related to classroom participation and its analysis. The analytical framework of these features is derived from the goals of the study. Since one of the goals of the present study is to show how participants use embodied actions to organise and display their participation, it follows this line of analysis using the CA methodology.

#### **4. 5. 4. Classroom desk talk**

Desk-talk in this study is defined as turns in which students self-select and nominate themselves to participate beyond the classroom discussion and when it is ongoing. Only those desk-turns between two or more students which appear to be designed as contributions to the ongoing discussion are included in this type of participation. Therefore, these utterances may not be aimed at the whole group discussion; but are designed mainly for student(s) sitting next to the speaker (desk partner) when the other members of the class are busy with the ongoing talk. This, however, excludes instances of 'private speech' in which turns are designed for the speaker her/himself and not for anybody else (Ohta, 2001).

This type of student talk alongside classroom oral discussion can be characterized as desk-talk in which utterances are built on the progression of the classroom oral activities. This type of talk includes any side utterance that is related to the ongoing classroom interaction. Students may resort to this kind of implicit talk for different purposes. For instance, students often exploit this type of talk to compensate for their lack of participation in the whole class discussion, especially in EFL classes where students have not the equal opportunity to participate orally. This is, because explicit oral discussion in most EFL classrooms is teacher-led and teachers have the right to nominate participants and decide which students may talk and when. Therefore, students resort to desk-talk to orientate themselves to what is going on around them; and thus, the larger the class is, the more behind-the-scenes talk is likely to occur.



On the other hand, sometimes the topic used in the classroom for oral discussion is difficult for students to understand (see, e.g., Brown and Yule, 1983; van Lier, 1988). This may be another factor causing increased desk-talk in the classroom. Trying to understand ongoing classroom interaction, therefore, students may resort to desk-talk, even though they do not have the right or obligation to speak. Instead they utilize such talk as a self selection mechanism to cope with the surrounding atmosphere. This type of talk often occurs unexpectedly, because students themselves control their turns while classroom discussion is in progress. In addition, desk-talk is organised in a similar way to the general patterns occurring in classroom interaction; either the current speaker selects the next-speaker or the next-speaker self selects to participate in (see e.g. Lerner, 2003). In this study, therefore, the nature of desk-talk contributions in EFL classroom activities behind the explicit oral discussion is examined in detail.

This type of talk has not often been described in the literature and view research about such kind of talk has been conducted. For example, Sahlström (1999) has found that desk-talk in plenary interaction is organised in a same way to the everyday conversation in which “all present parties take turns, and there is no pre-set agenda for the talk” (p. 143). He has also stated that students rely on desk-talk for understanding plenary interaction in a similar way to participation by hand-raising and self-selection. Sahlström (1999) claims that students display non-participation when they talk at their partner’s desk.

However, desk-talk beyond the classroom discussion as used by students to cope with the ongoing discussion has not been adequately investigated in previous studies of classroom participation. Such utterances behind the scenes among students who are equivalent may have a different nature than between a teacher and students where there is a power status. By investigating the natural occurrence of desk-talk inside the classroom, the characteristics of this phenomenon can be clarified, deepening our understanding of its relationship to classroom participation. In fact, both teachers and students may be generally unaware of how such utterances are constructed. Therefore, this study investigates this type of talk as it happens in EFL classrooms, in order to identify its role in the organisation of student participation. CA methodology is used to discover the relationship of such talk to classroom interaction.

As mentioned in the above section as well as in this section, the present study adopts CA methodology for analysing both embodied action and students' utterances in desk-talk. Therefore, a review of the CA literature and its nature is provided next.

## **5. The Nature of Conversation Analysis (CA)**

The subject has been dealt with by researchers for decades. As Drew and Heritage (1992b) state that the origins of CA go back to the late 1960s when the sociologist Harvey Sacks investigated calls made to a suicide prevention centre and recordings of group psychotherapy sessions (p. 60). The major applications of CA are in everyday conversation and in institutional

interactions where it has been employed in various ways. By its nature, the field of CA basically considers the nature of interaction. Many studies have used CA in combination with other relevant theories including, for example, sociocultural theory. However, many researchers have cautioned against using CA with such priori theories. Since CA is adopted for the analysis of data in the present study, a brief background of the field is required to explain the conversation analytic methodology. Also, a review of CA studies in both everyday and institutional conversation interactions is provided.

### **5. 1. The background and concepts of CA**

Markee (2000) defines CA as a form of analysis of conversational data that accounts for:

“the sequential structure of talk-in-interaction in terms of interlocutors’ real-time orientations to the preferential practices that underlie, for participants and consequently also for analysts, the conversational behaviors of turn-taking and repair in different speech exchange terms” (p. 25).

Hester and Francis (2000) indicate that conversation analysts can transfer information in transcripts to be available for review and they can show how participants create and sustain social order through their talk. Analysts depend on recordings and/or transcripts of talk without reference to external issues unacknowledged by the participants themselves. In this way, they strive for an ‘emic’ understanding of the interaction that is participant-relevant rather than researcher-imposed.

Heritage (1997) states that CA examines all aspects of the interaction because the sequences of “actions are a major part of what we [conversation analysts] mean by context” (p. 162). The utterances of each participant can only be understood in terms of both what was said before, since talk is context-shaped, and what relevant next action is performed, as talk is context-creating. In this way, CA preserves the ‘emic’ perspective due to a stringent adherence to the text, including only those contextual features that are made relevant by the participants. As Schegloff (1992) explains, CA may allow the inclusion of all aspects of context, even the race or gender of the participants, only if they are “demonstrably relevant to the participants” (p. 109). Recently, with the increasing use of video recordings and the subsequent inclusion of gesture and eye gaze in analysis, conversation analysts have begun to include visual representations of the physical context in their transcripts (see, e.g., Markee, 2005). Researchers include such visual cues because participants orient to them through embodied movements such as eye gaze.

Unlike other approaches of sociology, CA aims to discover how members of a society produce a sense of social order through language, rather than analysing the social order itself. Cicourel (1972, cited in Schiffrin, 1994, p. 232), states that “conversation is a source of much of our sense of social order, e.g. it produces many of the typifications underlying our notions of a social role”. While some approaches begin the analysis from the treatment of cultural or social identity and others from linguistic variables, the focus of CA is on the sequential organisation of talk. As Drew and Heritage (1992a) explain, CA begins “from a consideration of the interactional accomplishment

of particular social activities ... these activities are embodied in specific social actions and sequences of social actions” (p. 17). In this way, CA data analysis focuses on ‘sequences of activity’ that are larger than the individual sentence or utterance, involving the “analytic integration of what linguists would term the ‘illocutionary’ dimension of a current utterance with the ‘perlocutionary’ dimension of its prior has been a hallmark of CA data analysis from its inception” (ibid, p. 18).

Analysts focus mainly on conversation in order to provide details of actual events in a formal manner in a way that anyone else can also examine the data to see whether the findings are correct (see, e.g., Schiffrin, 1994, pp. 234-235). For this reason, conversation analysts depend on audio and/or video tape-recorded conversations which provide data that can be repeatedly analysed and inspected by the researcher or others.

Moreover, Mey (1993) states that conversation analysts are interested in actual pieces of language use, including all kinds of conversations, as they take place in real life (p. 195). Similarly, Schiffrin (1994) indicates that CA research focuses on the details of recorded conversations that occur naturally without the researcher prompting subjects to produce what is said and without indicating any “presuppositions about what might be important for either participants or analysts themselves” (p. 235). The transcriptions of recorded conversations include both linguistic and paralinguistic features, such as sound quality, pauses, gaps, and restarts (see, e.g., Pomerantz and Fehr, 1997, p. 65). In transcribing data, the most elaborate details are listed and the

focus remains on the specific events of the conversation. As Mey (1993) notes, making such transcriptions is not a trivial task because everything in conversation should be written down on paper for analysis (p. 195). By doing so, many different aspects of the talk such as opening and closing talk, turn-taking, and repair are available for study.

Context also plays a large role in the analysis of conversations. Every utterance is treated as 'context-shaped' and 'context-renewing' which means that "each utterance in a sequence is shaped by a prior context ... and provides a context for a next utterance" (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 235). The relevance of contextual features must be grounded in the text under analysis; the empirical conduct of the speakers is the central resource that the analyst uses to develop the analysis. Therefore, CA theorising is data-driven, as the data are the exclusive foundation for hypotheses (Mey, 1993, p. 195). Emanuel Schegloff elaborates upon the CA position that presuppositions must be avoided when determining the relevance of contextual features. Characterizations of the participants should be based on aspects of the interaction that are 'demonstrably relevant' to them (Schegloff, 1992, p. 109). Conversation analysts focus on all aspects of context that are empirically-warranted in the actual text; and, therefore, all findings must be grounded in what the participants actually said and/or did (see, e.g., Schiffrin, 1994). Because of this methodological rigour, CA offers close and detailed analyses of language use.

## **5. 2. CA and everyday/classroom interaction**

CA started as a method to “discover our ordinary, everyday procedures for constructing a sense of social and personal reality” (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 409). The study of institutional talk is then compared to everyday conversation which is to some degree regarded as a benchmark (Sacks et al., 1974). For example, McHoul’s (1978, 1985) studies of institutional settings (primary school classrooms) used CA to determine how the interactional architecture of these settings differs from the baseline of everyday talk-in-interaction. Such research provided a crucial precedent for later studies in this field. McHoul (1978) also noted that in formal classroom contexts there are longer gaps than in everyday conversation and the potential for overlap is minimised due to the teacher’s control of discussion. McHoul’s (1990) study of patterns of talk for repair in the classroom indicated that other-correction occurs more often in the classroom than in everyday conversation. He also found that the most common pattern of repair in the classroom occurs when the teacher allows the learners to correct themselves after highlighting the location for repair (self-correction). This reflects the preference for self-correction identified by Schegloff et al. (1977).

In his article ‘Linking the Pedagogical Purposes to Linguistic Patterns of Interaction: The Analysis of Communication in the Language Classroom’, Seedhouse (1994) stated that in the second language classroom there are essential characteristics which distinguish its talk from other forms of communication (p. 303). He argued that it is impossible to evaluate all classroom discourse by the same criteria, since the purposes of the teacher

and learners vary throughout a lesson and, thus, so does the nature of their talk (see also van Lier, 1984). Echoing McHoul's (1978, 1985, and 1990) findings, van Lier (1984) confirmed that the interactional architecture of a classroom can be considered by examining how it differs from 'general conversation' (p. 163). Although he did not explicitly use CA methodology, his analyses of talk in second language classrooms basically concerned the nature of turn-taking, and particularly turn transitions and turn distribution. He also emphasized the importance of student initiation in the classroom, and cautioned against looking at the classroom from one side only by focusing on the teacher's behaviour rather than the students (van Lier 1984, p. 164).

In his monograph *The Interactional Architecture of the Language Classroom: A Conversation Analysis Perspective*, Seedhouse (2004) presents a broad view of second language classroom discourse from a conversation-analytic perspective, examining each of the special and particular constraints on the talk in language classrooms. By examining turn-taking, repair, sequencing and overall structural organisation, Seedhouse finds that each of these patterns of talk has a reflexive relationship with the pedagogical focus at the time, so that examining this focus will lead to an understanding of the types of constraints that would be in place (p. 101). Seedhouse describes the focus in language classrooms in terms of three contexts: form and accuracy, meaning and fluency, and task-oriented. Seedhouse's claim that the interactional organisation reflects pedagogical focus echoed Kinginger's (1995) findings on task variation and repair in foreign language classrooms. By reviewing the interaction of participants in various tasks, Kinginger showed that the



interactional resources required by many tasks in the foreign language classroom are limited. She noted that everyday conversation requires participants to attend to and resolve sources of problems, while learners in a foreign language environment rarely have the ability to engage in such conversational discourse, and thus are deprived of the opportunity to practice interactional moves like repair.

As stated above, CA has been widely used by researchers in recent years to analyse classroom discourse or interaction. It is also employed to describe student participation in this study. Since student participation is related to classroom talk and interaction, it can be considered as an important factor for learning the language. Therefore, the ways in which the learning process has been accounted for in different approaches to classroom discourse and interaction are discussed in the following section.

### **5. 3. Approaches to classroom discourse and interaction**

This section introduces the frameworks that have contributed to research into learning through examining classroom discourse and interaction. Within studies undertaken on the learning process in the classroom, there are many points of view that affect how research may proceed. This section is related to the distinction between those studies of learning as an individual, cognitive process and those which see it as a situated, social process. Although some researchers from the interactionist tradition claim to examine classroom discourse, they conduct their studies by analysing discrete pieces of talk, instead of extended discourses or interactions between participants. This

limited focus is due to the interactionist concept of learning as an individual, cognitive process.

However, according to sociocultural perspectives, the researchers should start from the assumption that development begins externally and is then internalised, and thus learning is reconceptualised as participation (see, e.g., Donato, 2000). In order to explain the difference between these two points of view, research on learner talk within the interactionist tradition is first reviewed below. Then, several studies on classroom discourse from a sociocultural perspective are discussed. Finally, this section reviews recent applications of conversation analysis to classroom discourse in order to address the appropriateness and/or adequacy of CA in examining student talk, which may help to adopt appropriate framework for the present study.

### **5. 3. 1. The interactionist approach**

As mentioned above, in the interactionist tradition researchers apply their analysis to discrete items of talk, rather than extended talk or interaction. This tradition is largely influenced by the notion that learning is an individual, cognitive process, where context is not important because it is external. Context is seen as static, and it can be studied through different variables such as task type, participant nationality, and age (see, e.g., Gass et al., 2005). For instance, Long and Porter's (1985) research on inter-language talk distinguished those contexts in which learners had the most opportunity to practice the language. By measuring quantities of talk, the researchers in such study focused on counting discrete discourse items such as errors and

repair. They also showed the relationship between these variables of learner talk and static classroom contexts such as its teacher-fronted nature, pair work, and group work. They found that learners in every setting have opportunity for talk more than in teacher-fronted activity.

Kida (2005) investigated the interplay between teacher discourse and resultant learner discourse competence. Teacher talk was regarded as part of the context, while the learner discourse depended on 'across interactional context' (p. 473), rather than being co-constructed along with the teacher. In this case, learner talk competence was also analysed as discrete forms measured by quantifying items such as the length of utterances and topic-fullness. Another example dealing with context as static is Gass et al.'s (2005) study, which looked at learner talk in the two different settings of the classroom and laboratory. They focused on how learner talk is significantly different from one setting to another. To determine differences in learner discourse quality, Gass et al. (2005) counted different discourse types such as negotiation for meaning and recasts. They found that learner talk was dependent on task-type more than on context itself. They also indicated that the validity of the concept task-type was called into question; since learners interpreted tasks differently even when they were given the same instructions, and they often brought different motivations to learning depending on their personal aims (see also Lantolf, 2000; Mori, 2002).

Purpura's (2004) study on models of communicative competence noted that the learner's production of discrete grammatical items provides only sufficient

proof of their mastery of grammatical forms, rather than explaining how learners use “grammatical forms as a resource for conveying ... meaning” (p. 56). Therefore, according to the interactionist tradition in the studies discussed above, the conceptualisation of discourse as discrete items or grammatical forms fails to convey the complexity of classroom talk. As Donato (2000) states, this tradition is based on an unquestioned metaphor of acquisition which considers learning as the “taking in and possessing of knowledge” (p. 40). This metaphor, in fact, justifies in large part the focus of the interactionist tradition on discrete items or observable pieces of talk. On the other hand, the sociocultural perspective on learner talk sees it as a process of participation in the classroom, as discussed below.

### **5. 3. 2. The sociocultural approach**

The sociocultural approach has been one of the most influential approaches to language learning in recent years. Both social interaction and talk play a key role in this approach. Although studies of classroom discourse or interaction based on the sociocultural approach are also concerned primarily with learning, the emphasis in this theory is on the process more than the product. However, the sociocultural approach differs from the interactionist tradition and other cognitive approaches because “one of its main principles is that cognitive development and thus learning originates in a social context (such as the language classroom)” (Anton, 1999, p. 304). Researchers in this paradigm are therefore interested in the types of discourse environments that encourage learning opportunities. As Donato (2000) points out, learning and development of foreign and second languages is situated in this approach, (p.

47). The sociocultural researchers believe that “knowledge is not created in the individual mind, it is essentially created in the social realm, through interaction” (Gutierrez, 2008, p. 123). The fundamental issue here is that social and linguistic influences may have priority over individual cognition, and the former may affect or determine the latter (Vygotsky, 1978). The sociocultural approach, as defined by Wertsch (1990), is “an approach that focuses on the institutional, cultural, and historical specificity of mental functioning rather than on universals” (p. 112). Since the main focus of this section is on language in the classroom where social interaction and talk are important factors, language socialisation research as a perspective within sociocultural theory is reviewed below.

Studies of classroom talk based on language socialisation concentrate mainly on the contributions of novices (learners) and experts (teachers). Ochs (1991) states that language socialisation is a ‘dynamic’ and ‘synergistic’ process in which all participants are interactionally included (p. 146). However, research in this field has also minimised or disregarded learner talk and focused more on the teacher. Furthermore, while some studies focus on teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction, others have neglected the contributions of the novice in the interaction. For example, Poole’s (1992) research on language socialisation in the second language classroom dealt basically with the socialising functions of the teacher’s talk, and did not adequately consider the talk of the learners in her study. She compared the expert role in first language socialisation (i.e. from caregivers) and the expert role in second language socialisation (i.e., teachers), and showed that each is “culturally

constrained and motivated” (Poole 1992, p. 611). She found that the IRF/E sequence in the classroom may play an important socialising role due to its prevalence in caretaker-child interactions. Similarly, Seedhouse (1996) noted that recitation scripts that are used at home should not be abandoned in the classroom because they play an important role in learning. Although Poole’s findings about the similarities in the expert roles of both teacher and caretaker are important, the contributions of learners in her study were likewise neglected, as in much language socialisation research.

By examining the issue of learner-learner interaction, Allwright (1980, p. 168) claimed that ‘guidance’ in the classroom is exclusively part of the teacher’s role, but all participants should be included in this guidance. In the same line of research, Ohta and Nakaone’s (2004) study of questioning in a foreign language setting revealed the effectiveness of learner-learner interactions in the language classroom. They found that roles of novice and expert are fluid in learner-learner interaction, allowing each learner to contribute as an expert when appropriate. By examining questions in pair or group work, Ohta and Nakaone found that learner questions to peers overwhelmingly received correct answers, and that learners only turned to the teacher when they were unable to answer (p. 235). In this way, learners scaffold each other’s learning, and with their teacher’s help they are able to achieve what they cannot do alone. Also, Tharp and Gallimore (1991, p. 5) indicated that dialogue, which they called ‘interactional conversation’, can be considered as a form of assisting learning. Similarly, Donato (2000) pointed out that dialogue can be conversational when a broad distribution of turn-taking as well as a degree of

spontaneity or unpredictability is demonstrated; or interactional when the teacher is controlling the discussion. In this way, researchers indicate that the dialogue used may restrict learning opportunities in teacher-controlled activity, and they recommend allowing learners to control the dialogue so that teachers are able to observe what learners can do on their own (see, e.g., Thornbury, 2002).

According to these different studies discussed above, it can be seen that CA has been dealt with by researchers for decades. Two major categories are mainly considered in CA studies: everyday and classroom conversations, both of which have been dealt with from different angles. Also, CA studies are rooted in several approaches including interactionist and sociocultural perspectives.

### **5. 3. 3. Conversation analysis studies**

In the recent years, conversation analysis and applied linguistic studies have had a considerable impact on SLA (e.g., Richards and Seedhouse, 2005; Young and Lee, 2004; Li, 2002; Egbert, 1998; Firth and Wagner 1997). This final section reviews conversation-analytic studies related to the nature of talk in classrooms, showing how CA can be used as a suitable research approach to study classroom interaction and SLA. It also shows how CA can be employed to study the language used in the classroom in various different ways.

Some figures of the field such as Schegloff, Seedhouse, Markee and Hall appear to have different points of view regarding the combination of conversation analysis with other methods. While some researchers argue that using CA for data analysis should be compatible with any other theory of learning such as sociocultural approach, others believe that it must be utilized on its own terms (see, e.g., Hall, 2004). Markee (2005b) investigated the structure of repair in learner-learner interaction. He attempted to show that repair is a “*psycholinguistically* important catalyst for SLA” (p. 211, emphasis in original). According to him, CA has come “under increasing pressure to demonstrate how and why an understanding of social structure *per se* illuminates SLA [second language acquisition] processes” (p. 211).

Another study by Markee and Kasper (2004), which has been included in the modern Language journal (MLJ) studies, discussed the background of CA in general, explaining that conversation analysts have reviewed classroom talk as a kind of institutional talk where teachers have privileged interactional rights. Markee and Kasper argued that ‘Situating Learning Theory’ (a branch of sociocultural theory) can be seen as supporting a socially distributed view of learning. This is what they call a ‘strong view’ of CA for SLA (p. 493). Markee and Kasper stated that the ‘emic’ approach that CA studies adopt provides an exposition of meaning in terms of the “local context of talk in interaction”. They also argue that the focus within CA and interactional sociolinguistics on the use of situated action “implies a grounded, social, and discursive perspective on language, rather than an idealised, cognitive, sentence-level understanding of what language is” (p.495).



In the same issue of the MLJ, and Pekarek-Doehler's (2004) study accounted for not only interactional variables, but also institutional and sociocultural influences. They focused on a task designed to elicit specific linguistic features, and found that interaction is variable and dynamic. It can be considered as primarily social and communicative because it is concerned with not only "the cognitive dimensions of the task but also of its social meaning and the communicative situation through which the task is administered" (p. 510). Thus, CA is used here as a methodological tool in the service of a sociocultural theory of learning (see also, e.g., Young and Miller, 2004). Conversely, some researchers argue that CA is a behavioural discipline, and thus is not suited to an examination of participants' mental states (e.g., He, 2004; Wagner, 2004).

Markee's (2004) study examines interactional transitions rather than learning. He investigated how interactional transitions are manifested within the speech exchange systems in classrooms, and finds that:

"When teachers and learners make the transition from one speech exchange system to another, it is quite common for problems of various kinds to occur as members adjust to the turn-taking and repair practices of the new speech exchange system." (p. 584).

Although he highlighted the role that CA can play in explicating moment-by-moment interactional phenomena and how they are of interest to conversation analysts and SLA researchers alike, Markee noted that "there can be no clear-cut boundary between language acquisition and use in SLA studies that are motivated by the Interaction Hypothesis" (p. 593).

In a similar study, Kasper (2004) showed the role that CA can play in explaining interactional categories such as acquaintance and how these categories appeared to follow a cyclical pattern. In her study of dyadic interactions between learners and native speakers of German, Kasper found that when the interactional categories shift, the learners' discursive practices shift as well. She also showed that specific interactional moves such as repair initiations and topic closing were dependent on these shifts in dyadic roles.

Again in the same 2004 issue of MLJ, Hall indicated that the utility of CA in the study of SLA processes was that it provided "a view of interaction as a form of social action with its own set of systematic procedures or practices", and that classroom interaction "is not one generic type of discourse, but instead, is a constellation of complex, interactionally intricate practices" (p. 608). Also, Hall (2004) went on to state that the primary methodological advantage of CA is to allow us to understand "the intricately accomplished details of classroom talk" (p. 608). She argued that "social interaction does not just provide opportunities for guiding an otherwise internally driven process" (p. 609), but it is also the catalyst for learning and development. Comparing the various perspectives concerning the utility of CA in the study of SLA features, Hall noted that it is possible to conceive of CA as merely a theoretical approach to the study of language learning on its own, although some studies insist on using CA as a methodological tool in the service of another conceptual framework such as sociocultural theory.

Considering the compatibility of CA with other approaches, Seedhouse (2005) placed CA for SLA within a sociocultural perspective. He indicated that both methods can be paired together for analysing conversation. In this case, Seedhouse described sociocultural theory as “a learning theory” while CA is “an empirical research methodology” (p. 175). Following a similar line of reasoning, Kasper (2006) stated that CA for SLA generally joins conversation analysis with a sociocultural perspective on language learning, situated learning, or language socialisation. Also, she indicated that CA can show how the task-in-progress differs from the task-as-work plan. Although Kasper did not provide an explicit extension to a theory of learning, she argued that “CA provides a method of observing socially distributed cognition” (p. 93). Kasper, on the other hand, noted that some researchers (such as He 2004) believe that CA only considers “affordances of learning” (p. 92), and that it cannot deal with language learning. Waring (2008) similarly notes, within a sociocultural approach, where learning is conceptualised as participation, CA can “detail the instructional practices that either create or inhibit the opportunities for participation ... and by extension, the opportunities for learning” (p. 577).

By focusing mainly on a description of the nature of interaction, Seedhouse’s (2004) monograph provides a more moderate approach to CA for SLA. Seedhouse argues that CA can contribute to SLA research “in terms of the portrayal of social distributed cognition” (p. 240). He also finds that this argument is only valid to “areas of SLA which use spoken interaction (both inside and outside the classroom) as data” (p. 236). As Kasper (2008)

maintains, cognition should be “analysed as embedded in social interaction and locally and contingently occasioned by current interactional events” (p. 60). Along similar lines, Schegloff (1991) explains that intersubjectivity or shared understanding by interlocutors is part of socially shared cognition. He claims that intersubjectivity does not deal only with shared understanding of prior talk, but also with “some considerable degree of shared understanding of what has gone before, both proximally and distally, and what alternative courses of action lie ahead” (p. 157). Schegloff also refers to repair as a mechanism for ensuring that socially distributed cognition can occur, allowing participants to check that their understanding is indeed shared. Students’ use of embodied action and desk-talk during the classroom discussion in the present study as analysed in chapters five and six, might therefore be considered as discursive actions in pursuit of intersubjectivity.

Similarly, Seedhouse (2004) explains how CA represents the progress of intersubjectivity or socially distributed cognition. He argues that:

“CA does not claim to be able to establish the cognitive state of individuals in isolation. What it is able to portray and explicate, however, is the progress of intersubjectivity or socially distributed cognition.” (p. 239)

In this way, Seedhouse (2004) illustrates that CA aims to uncover how participants understand each other through orienting and displaying their cognitive states utterances and actions. In his monograph, Seedhouse (2004) traces analysis through an extract in order to show the socially distributed nature of cognition and evidence provided for it by CA. He finds that participants display their orientation not only to each other, but also to the rest

of the class and to the analyst in order to understanding their utterances. This is achieved by the use of interactional resources such as turn-taking, sequence, and repair. Seedhouse argues that CA of the sample extract “demonstrates not only what understandings the interactants display to each other, but also how they do so by normative reference to interactional organisations” (p. 239). In this way, he notes that CA contributes to showing how learning is constructed by the use of such interactional resources and to explaining the progress of learning and socially distributed cognition. However, instead of analysing these interactional resources alone, they can be associated with different signals of embodied action such as gazing and head nodding. In this way, participants may display their understanding of the interaction from different perspectives. Therefore, participants’ understanding should be analysed not just in relation to their utterances, but also in relation to their embodied action. The participants’ use of such embodied actions during the interactions in this study, as presented in chapter five, is also considered to be another factor along with spoken data to describe students’ understanding.

Markee (2005a) used microanalysis to examine interaction in terms of socially distributed cognition. He found that CA for SLA psycholinguistically takes interesting extracts of S/FL learners’ talk. Markee’s (2005a) perspective on CA for SLA represented the field of CA as an emerging approach to the study of SLA where CA methods are used to analyse learning and teaching processes. He stated that there is empirical evidence that “attention in talk-in-interaction is as much an observable, socially distributed activity that is

constructed by two or more interlocutors on a moment-by-moment basis as it is an individual phenomenon” (p. 368), whose inner workings “are only accessible to researchers through post hoc, personal introspection” (ibid).

In order to understand learning in different contexts, Hall (2007) indicated that researchers should continue to use conversation-analytic methodology for the study of SLA. Additionally, Seedhouse (2004) equated the concepts of ‘socially distributed cognition’ and ‘socially distributed learning’. He argued that the linguistic aspects of CA are “certainly unable to portray the level of socially distributed cognition or learning, by contrast to ethnomethodological CA” (p. 237). Seedhouse (2004, pp. 243-244) found that CA “gives access to socially distributed cognition” as well as “to socially distributed language learning processes” (see also Schegloff, 1991). Towards the end of Seedhouse’s (2004) monograph, he suggests that CA is compatible with SLA and can contribute to its project by providing:

- A methodology for analyzing and ensuring the construct validity (in a quantitative paradigm) of discursal data prior to quantification
- A methodology for deriving definitions and classifications inductively from discursal data
- A methodology for portraying processes of socially shared cognition and learning
- A methodology for the analysis of L2 classroom discourse
- An emic methodology to determine learners’ focus, which is vital for the FFI project
- A direct link to the social dimension
- A description of the interactional organization of L2 classroom discourse and a model for relating to one another the findings in regard to different subvarieties of interaction (p. 252).

The conversation-analytic studies discussed in this section represent the most up-to-date research and provide a wealth of information regarding the

systematic nature of talk in classrooms. This section has also reviewed research combining conversation-analytic methods with other theories of learning. The main aim has been to address the different approaches and findings of research into classroom interaction and CA. Some researchers combine conversation analysis with sociocultural theory or any other theories of learning, while others assert that CA must be utilized on its own terms.

To sum up, CA initially focused on what is called everyday conversation. This focus has increasingly shifted to institutional settings. The institutional research can show how interaction in institutions differs from that in ordinary conversation (Hester and Francis, 2000, p. 392). For example, turn-taking in ordinary conversation is locally managed, and all participants can self-select to participate where necessary, while turn-taking in classroom interaction operates differently where the teacher has interactional rights (McHoul, 1990). Taking account of this difference, ten Have (2007) argues that pure CA is the study of interaction in its own right, and applied CA is the study of how “interactions with an institutional purpose ... were organized as institutional interactions” (p. 174). This does not necessarily mean, however, that pure and applied CA are divided according to the study of ‘ordinary conversation’ and ‘institutional interaction’ respectively. Rather pure CA is the study of any talk-in-interaction, whatever its context, and applied CA mainly focuses on the organisation of interaction in an institutional setting such as turn-taking; and on “the ways in which the interactants show their orientations to these situations and requirements” (ten Have, 2007, p. 8). Since the present study attempts to describe how students organise their participation in the

institutional context of classroom settings, the theoretical and analytical methods employed for this study lie mostly within the applied CA framework. This clear focus of CA, as well as the possibility of using it in its own right recommended by researchers (such as Hall, 2004), provide the rationale for choosing CA as the methodology and the conceptual framework for this research.

Moreover, there are many conversation analysts who caution against using CA with a priori theories such as sociocultural theory, arguing that such a pairing goes against “emic epistemology” (Markee, 2008, pp. 406-407). Since the present study aims to describe the complexity of student participation in EFL classroom activities, in order to uncover the nature of such participation in whole group settings, the research is mainly concerned with the participation process itself rather than with participation as a source of language learning.



## **6. Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of the process of classroom participation as expressed through different interactional resources. It is argued that the complexity of student participation requires an 'emic' analysis looking at the moment-to-moment shared orientation between all participants as the lesson unfolds through interaction. The majority of previous research has focused mainly on explicit talk in understanding student participation, and only a few studies have been conducted on the other types of participation such as non-verbal behaviour. Therefore, much remains to be learned about the micro-interactional practices used by language learners in classroom work as part of an overall understanding of how language learners participate through the range of embodied actions which they employ. They are constructing a kind of group participation through the distribution of meaningful signals. In order to understand the other types of student participation during ongoing activity, the details of student participation must be described in relation to all parties in the classroom, including the teacher and all students. This means that, the analysis should deal with all aspects of engagement that participants rely on in their social interaction in the classroom, including both verbal and/or non-verbal aspects. Thus, the complexity of participation in the classroom as a multiparty environment should be described in a detailed and dynamic account. The analysis in this study basically includes the description of student participation rather than analysing learning or pedagogical concepts.

This chapter has also reviewed different studies of the conversation-analytic framework in relation to other learning approaches. The purpose of this was to provide a comprehensive review of how CA can be used as a research approach to classroom interaction and in SLA research. From such studies related to classroom talk, it is found that CA can be used to study classroom interaction in various different ways. While some researchers argue that conversation analysis should be compatible with sociocultural or some other theory of learning, others believe that it must be utilized on its own terms. It is argued here that CA should be used as a framework in this study rather than pairing it with another learning approach, as discussed further in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Three**

### **METHODOLOGY: Theoretical Foundation**

Chapter three provides an overview of how conversation analysis (CA) as a research method has been approached. This chapter begins by stating the purpose of the study and the research questions to be answered. Then conversation analysis as the methodological framework used in the present study is introduced. This includes definitions, aims and, in particular, the epistemology of CA.

## **1. Introduction**

As discussed in chapter two, CA is particularly relevant in describing student participation due to its inherently social and interactional philosophy. This chapter shows how CA aims to describe social interaction between participants, and how this relates to the analysis of participation in classroom interaction. It explains how to deal with data through the CA framework. Some issues such as the definition of terms, basic aims and epistemology of CA are discussed along with the way data are interpreted in this thesis. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is to present a foundation for data analysis rather than providing detailed information on CA. In order to understand CA in more details, more reading to the basic sources in this field is needed, including, for example, Atkinson and Heritage (1984), Goodwin and Heritage (1990), Seedhouse (1996, 2004), Pomerantz and Fehr (1997), Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), Silverman (1998), ten Have (1999), and Wooffitt (2005).

## **2. Aims and Research Questions**

The present study is guided by the assumption that student participation might involve more than the production of explicit verbal participation in the classroom. Although oral engagement can be considered the main indicator of student participation, many students choose to participate in other modes rather than participating orally during classroom discussion. Thus, this research aims to extend existing knowledge of student participation by describing what is actually going on in EFL classroom discussion. The main focus of this analysis is to find out whether or not students are participated in classroom discussion through other modes alongside oral participation.

Therefore, the research aims to uncover the organisation of student participation in EFL classrooms in which activities are often teacher-led, and so this study highlights two main research questions. The first addresses the description of the student participation during the ongoing classroom interaction, while the second question examines students' talk beyond teacher-student verbal interaction:

- 1) How is student participation organized during the ongoing discussion in EFL classroom?
- 2) How is student participation organized beyond teacher-student oral interaction in EFL classroom?

These two questions represent the principal aim of this study, which deals with types of student participation other than oral participation. Most previous studies, such as Peterson (2001), have focused on student oral participation and on how student participation is organised and built on the teachers' prompts and/or questions in the classroom, as in Weaver and Qi (2005). However, Mortensen's (2008) research on student non-verbal participation in Danish as second language classrooms aimed to understand how students were engaged in classroom activities and how teachers facilitated this participation through their instructions. He described classroom participation from the students' perspective, but in relation to the teacher's instructions and facilities. The findings showed that the teacher represents an important factor in describing student participation. However, more research is needed to obtain a broader view of how such a dynamic interaction between students

themselves is accomplished and organised in EFL classrooms. Similarly, the present study describes student participation from students' own perspectives, but as entire classroom participation rather than as teacher-student participation or in relation to the teacher's instructions and facilitation. Moreover, previous CA studies in this area have mainly focused on explicit oral participation, leaving non-verbal aspects and desk-talk phenomenon during lessons under-examined. To describe student participation in EFL classrooms, it may be necessary to conduct analyses of all behaviour performed by students during lessons, including non-verbal actions and desk-talk. In this way, this study describes the dynamic process that occurs between participants who rely on different resources to display their participation in ongoing interaction. Thus, providing answers to the research questions presented above may help to fill these gaps in knowledge about classroom participation.

These two research questions of this study were derived from the general assumption discussed above which concerns different modes of classroom participation. Therefore, the first question deals with embodied action in which participants employ different signals during the ongoing discussion in order to participate. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to analyse students' movements throughout the interaction. This analysis includes all conversational mechanisms accompanied with embodiments, such as turn-taking organization and adjacency pairs, in which all participants interact with each other in the classroom. The findings of the analysis are presented in chapter five.

The second question deals with the desk talk employed by participants who are indirectly participated in classroom interaction. In order to answer this question, participants' turns and utterances beyond the ongoing discussion were recorded and analysed. All sequence types and other conversational mechanisms used among participants beyond the explicit discussion were therefore uncovered to determine how such utterances related to the ongoing discussion. Chapter six contains the answers to this research question.

Thus, analysis in the present study focuses mainly on the two different modes of participation: embodied action and desk talk. These were chosen because it was found in the collected data that most participants preferred not to participate orally during classroom discussion. Rather they relied on movements and signals during the ongoing discussion as well as implicit turns and utterances beyond classroom talk. Since CA is used as a methodological framework to describe student participation, analysing the interactional and sequential organisation of classroom talk in this study, a brief overview of the process of CA is given in the following section.

### **3. Methodological Aspects of CA**

This section gives an overview of the major methodological issues in CA, including definitions of concepts, aims, epistemology, and the distinction between CA and other analytical approaches. The applications of CA and justifications for using it in this study are also fully explained, followed by the limitations of CA, and the rationale for using it in this research.

### **3. 1. Definition of CA**

CA has been dealt with by a number of researchers. Major definitions of CA are given by several conversation analysts, such as Atkinson and Heritage (1984), Psathas (1995), Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), and ten Have (2007). According to Atkinson and Heritage (1984), the central objectives of CA studies are to describe and explicate the competences that ordinary speakers employ and rely on in participating in intelligible, socially organised interaction.

Another important concept was provided by Psathas (1995) who defines CA as:

“the study of talk-in-interaction [which] represents a methodological approach to the study of mundane social action...[by its] rigorous [and] systematic procedures for studying social actions that also provide reproducible results” (p.1).

According to the definition of CA provided by Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), it is: “the study of recorded, naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (p. 14). Also, CA can be defined as a specific analytic endeavour that can describe and explain the ways in which conversationalists maintain the social interactional order of talk-in-interaction, whatever its character or setting (ten Have 2007, pp. 3-4).

These definitions provide a general background for CA and its different types of analysis. From the definitions described above, a number of key concepts relating to the object of CA research are provided, including socially organised interaction, talk-in-interaction, mundane social interaction, the interactional social order of talk-in-interaction, the study of recorded, and naturally



occurring talk-in-interaction. All of these characteristics of the object of CA research can be found in classroom interaction, so that data collected from classrooms can also be described as socially organised interaction that may occur naturally. Therefore, CA can be utilized in such context to describe all classroom engagements that participants employ to participate.

### **3. 2. Aims of CA**

It is clear from the above discussion that the aims of CA are to describe the social actions and how people interact. According to CA, also, interaction and social actions are related because people create the social world they live in through interaction. More specifically, people represent the situation they are participating in when they interact and perform social actions together. Therefore, CA aims to describe the social actions rather than linguistic structures, because the focus is on what people do rather than what they say. For this reason, conversational analysts should describe the interactive construction of social action performed using a range of different resources. Social relations between people which are internal to their interaction are shaped and analysed on the basis of the “moment-by-moment determination of ... social contexts” (Heritage, 1984, p. 2).

In order to understand the social relations that participants are involved in during interaction, the context-free machinery such as turn-taking organization should be described (see chapter two, section 3.2.2). The analyst therefore relies on the sequential context in which the turn-at-talk occurs to describe social actions. Each turn-at-talk must be understood in relation to the context

in which it occurs. For instance, a 'hello' following another 'hello' might be described and understood as a 'return greeting' or a display of disagreement. Therefore, the structure of turn-at-talk provides a framework for following turns and should be analysed on this basis. As Seedhouse (2004, p. 14) states, one of the CA principles is that "contributions to interaction are *context-shaped* and *context-renewing*" (see also, e.g., Sacks, et al., 1974; Heritage, 1984; Goodwin and Duranti, 1992b; Schegloff, 1992). Being means that each turn or action is shaped by the previous turn/action '*context shaped*'; and at the same time '*context renewing*' because it constitutes the context for the next-turn. Therefore, the sequential organisation of talk is very important. Silverman (1998) also states that:

"when we speak we do far more complicated things than simply confirming assertions and/or emptying out the contents of our minds. Instead, it seems that what we say will be heard in terms of its position in this particular conversational 'space'- after a previous turn and in the light of a possible next turn." (p. 8)

In this way, interactants are aware of the implications of their utterances which include exactly what they mean. For this reason, it is important to note that interactional behaviour "is not rule-governed but rule-guided. In this sense, you can do what you like but you will be held accountable for the implications of your actions" (Silverman, 1998, p. 35).

CA also aims to capture and describe as much detail as possible through transcriptions of audio and/or video recordings. This means that analysts cannot exclude any detail, even a micro pause, unless the analysis shows that it is not relevant. According to Garfinkel (1967), these details are called

*members' methods* because people use them to engage in meaningful interaction which constitutes their social lives. These details are thus used by participants to orient in conversation.

CA proceeds on the assumption of *intersubjectivity* (see section 5.3.3 of chapter two). When participants interact with each other, they continuously display their understanding of the local context, such as the prior turn by the co-participant, as part of the ongoing action they are engaged in. Through the collaborative construction of interactive processes, participants display how they understand the situation they are participated in. Antaki (2006) notes that participants do not have access to what co-participants really mean, but only to what they say and do. Therefore, the participants, and hence the analyst, have to rely on what matters for the participants in the interaction. This is a dynamic process that occurs on a turn-by-turn basis where turns display the participant's understanding of the prior turn by the co-participant. Similarly, Seedhouse (2004) explains how CA gives access to 'socially distributed cognition'. He argues that:

“CA does not claim to be able to establish the cognitive state of individuals in isolation. What it is able to portray and explicate, however, is the progress of intersubjectivity or socially distributed cognition.” (p. 239)

Seedhouse illustrates that CA aims to uncover how participants understand each other through orienting and displaying their cognitive states, utterances and actions.

### **3. 3. Epistemology of CA**

From an epistemological point of view, CA developed from Garfinkel's (1967) programme of ethnomethodology, where norms and values are established through social relations. Garfinkel stated that people orient to social action accomplished through interaction. They constantly establish and re-define norms through interaction with other members of society. However, Garfinkel criticised the top-down perspective in which people are "judgmental dopes" (p. 68) and passive receivers of some pre-defined norms. Rather, Garfinkel adopts a bottom-up perspective as opposed to Parsons's (1951, 1937) top-down approach, for explaining how norms can be defined and how they are 'passed on'.

Sacks, who previously worked with Garfinkel, was the principal originator of CA. He was interested in conversation as the place where social structures can be found, described and analyzed. Sacks's research in the early 1960s on audio recordings from a suicide prevention centre (see, e.g., Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, p. 18) provided the foundation for the CA endeavour to outline the systematic organization of talk-in-interaction on the basis of which people make sense of the social actions.

Another important figure in sociology is Erving Goffman, who argued that the study of face-to-face interaction was analytically viable and that the best approach to it was through microanalysis. Although he criticized macro-sociological approaches to the social world, Goffman did not ignore the influence of such factors. Instead his aim was to study the social order on an

interpersonal level (Drew and Wootton, 1988, p. 3). He was interested in the procedures through which people manage face-to-face interaction, arguing that:

“conversational interaction represents an institutional order *sui generis* in which interactional rights and obligations are linked not only to personal face and identity, but also to macro-social institutions” (Heritage, 1998, p. 3).

Schegloff (1988, p. 95) argues that Goffman's emphasis on face as the centre of interaction guided him away towards the individual and psychological acts rather than the social character of interaction ‘interaction as non-interactional’. Goffman's approach was basically ‘observation’ to demonstrate his points providing examples of how people act and react in social situation, and fascinating descriptions.

Through its analysis of ‘folk’ (‘ethno’) methods, ethnomethodology is interested in describing how people make sense of social life, (Silverman, 2006). This fundamental understanding of the relationship between people, interaction and society plays a crucial part in CA. CA adopts many principles from ethnomethodology, such as its ‘bottom-up’ perspective included in its methodological framework. Another principle which can also be considered is that CA is not ‘theory-driven’, but rather “analysis is strongly ‘data-driven’-developed from phenomena which are in various ways evidenced in the data of interaction”, Heritage (1984, p. 243). Furthermore, CA adopts other important concepts from ethnomethodological principles, as Seedhouse (2004) points out:

“I will introduce five fundamental and interlocked principles which underline ethnomethodology and also CA, although they are rarely referred to explicitly in published accounts of CA methodology: indexicality, documentary method of interpretation, reciprocity of perspectives, normative accountability, and reflexivity” (pp. 6-7)

As quoted above, one of the ethnomethodological principles is *indexicality* or *context-boundedness* which concerns with the reflexive relationship between talk and context and how participants are orienting through their utterances to the context in which talk occurs. Also, the *documentary method of interpretation* is “central to ethnomethodology. It treats any actual real-world action as a “document” or an example of a previously known pattern”, (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 7). Any utterance during talk can be considered as a document used to analyse the other turns in the sequence and as social action. Also, the reciprocity of perspectives includes a willingness to follow the same norms which provide affiliation with the perspectives of others. This is linked to indexicality in which all participants should agree to index their interaction in the same way. By dealing with the ethnomethodological basis of CA, the normative accountability principle refers to norms as being constitutive in which the actions are performed and interpreted. This is; such norms are constructed on the basis of turn taking, sequence, repair and preference through which the social actions are performed and designed. The final principle cited above is ‘reflexivity’, which represents the CA mechanism of the adjacency pair. Here, “the same set of methods or procedures are responsible for both the production of actions/utterances and their interpretation”, Seedhouse (2004, p. 11). In addition, more details and examples of these ethnomethodological principles are provided in Seedhouse

(2004, pp. 7-12).

Seedhouse (2004) further argues that, even though CA concepts are based on ethnomethodological principles, it is necessary for CA to develop its own subset of principles and procedures, such as the order at all points in interaction and that the analysis is bottom-up and data driven. This is because ethnomethodology's general principles can be used to study any kind of human action, but CA focuses more specifically only on human actions as demonstrated in and through talk, Seedhouse (2004, p. 13).

However, a distinction can be made between the CA and ethnography. Both approaches are related to each other as they "can be helpful to build up a knowledge base that is sufficiently similar to what a member knows to understand what is going on" (ten Have 2007, p. 78). This means that both approaches are concerned with the participants' perspectives. As Markee (2000) explains, ethnographic research and CA can deal with particular details to determine the perspectives of participants rather than dealing with general details to develop the researcher's perspective. More specifically, these two approaches are interrelated and complement each other. Pallotti (2007) points out that "CA extends ethnography's scope to the micro-level of turns and sequences, which can be seen as the smallest units of social life", and "ethnography may extend CA's focus to wider levels of social organisation and knowledge, which may be necessary to interpret participants' moves in conversational exchanges" (p. 54).

Some researchers such as Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) believe that CA describes the members' own perspectives through norms in interaction when the analyst is part of the culture or community of practice studied. Similarly, Markee (2000, p. 26) indicates that the analyst relies on a detailed description to understand members' perspectives which can be obtained from their cultures and biographies and through triangulating various data collection techniques using a number of perspectives from different members. Other researchers such as Goodwin (1994, 2000a), however, confirm that when analysts investigate an unfamiliar field they must have some idea of the organization of the group as well as which technical tools it relies on to do its work and how it uses them. In this case, as Markee (2000) points out, analysts who work within the 'purist' tradition of CA,

“make no appeal to ethnographic accounts of members' cultures or biographies to make an argument unless there is internal evidence in the conversational data to provide a warrant for the introduction of such data” (p. 27).

Therefore, it is not necessary for the analyst to be a part of the culture or community of practice in order to understand talk-in-interaction.

### **3. 4. Ethnography use in the current study**

As shown in the above section, ethnography is one mainstream social science research methodology with which CA may create links (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 88). Although the theoretical basis for this research is inspired by the methodology of conversation analysis, ethnography was the eclectic approach to incorporate CA methodology for data collection procedures. Both methods take a holistic approach to the study of classroom interaction by different



means. More specifically, the study is carried out within a framework guided by applied CA, since this research puts more emphasis on analysing social interaction between participants, and how this relates to the analysis of participation in classroom interaction. Approaching data in this study is informed by CA concerned procedures for data analysis and data collection. However, ethnography was helpful to build up a knowledge base for dealing with particular details to determine the perspectives of participants. As the author of this research is a part of the culture or community of practice studied, he used his background knowledge to understand participants' practices by developing a detailed description that can be a profile of students' cultures and biographies through various data collection techniques. Also, from the very first session, it was noticed that extended sequences of desk-talk were taking place among students in different parts of the classroom. Therefore, it was decided to capture these desk conversations because it seemed likely that they were related to the ongoing interaction. For this reason, the number of audio recorders was increased and distributed in different areas of the classroom. This may obviously clarify to what extent such notes and observations contribute to understanding of these complex phenomena in classrooms. Therefore, the relationship between CA and ethnography is important because they are interrelated and complement each other. Ethnography approach may extend CA's focus to wider levels of social organisation and knowledge, which may be necessary to interpret participants' perspectives in conversational exchanges (Pallotti, 2007, p. 54).

### 3. 5. CA and other analytic approaches

Several approaches including CA can be employed to measure, analyse and describe participants' behaviour in the classroom. There are major differences between CA and other discourse analytic approaches. While some approaches such as Discourse Analysis (DA) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) take into account external concepts and existing theories, CA deals primarily with internal concepts and avoids applying pre-theoretical notions and preconceptions to data analysis. More specifically, Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998, p. 6) indicate that DA is mainly concerned to "develop a theory of spoken discourse as a structured phenomenon, often using the model of grammar as its basis"; while CDA "is concerned to analyse how social and political inequalities are manifest in and reproduced through discourse" (Wooffitt, 2005). CDA reflects a theoretical or political orientation rather than analysing what is actually relevant to the participants themselves (Wooffitt, 2005, p. 158). However, the characteristics that distinguish CA from the other approaches as provided by ten Have (2007) are:

- CA operates *closer to the phenomena* than most other approaches, because it works on detailed renderings of interactional activities, and detailed transcripts, rather than on coded, counted, or otherwise summarized representations; because of this it can take into consideration details and subtleties of human interaction that are lost in other practices and that have proven to be important for participants.
- CA favours *naturally occurring data* rather than 'experimental' or 'researcher-provoked' ones, because it considers talk-in-interaction as a 'situated' achievement rather than as a product of personal intentions, to be studied in interviews, or external forces, that can be manipulated in a laboratory; it is therefore less 'artificial'.

- CA's perspective on human interaction is *organizational and procedural*: when people talk with each other this is not seen as a series of individual acts, but rather as an emergent collectively organized event; the analytic purpose is not to explain *why* people act as they do, but rather to explicate *how* they do it.
- CA can be seen as a study of language-as-used, but this is done in terms of a linguistic system as such, although there is a rising interest in the different interactive resources that various languages provide; and while more traditional forms of linguistics are mainly based on written language, strictly following normative rules of correct usage, CA studies oral language as actually used interactionally in 'natural' situations. (emphases in original, pp. 9-10)

### 3. 6. CA applications for this study

As discussed above in section 3.2, the primary aim of CA research is to study talk-in-interaction. In this way, CA deals with the mechanisms of talk that participants use during interaction to describe sequential patterns of interaction. As Heritage (2006) indicates, CA deals with the ways in which “utterances accomplish particular actions by virtue of their placement and participation within sequences of actions” (p. 1). Moreover, Seedhouse (2004) states that CA aims to explicate the progress of ‘intersubjectivity’ (see sections 3.2 of this chapter and 5.3.3 of chapter two) in order to uncover how participants understand each other through orienting and displaying their cognitive states utterances and actions (p. 239). Therefore, in order to describe how students organise their participation in this study, the conversational mechanisms of interactional organisation, in conjunction with sequences of actions, were analysed.

Turn-taking organisation is an example of the conversational mechanisms used in this study to analyse talk in-interaction. CA works within turn-taking

organisation to describe the context and social actions (see section 3.2.2 of chapter two). Each turn-at-talk must be understood in relation to the sequential context in which it occurs. Turn-taking organisation can be divided into two components: turn construction and turn allocation. The former component describes *turn-constructional units* (TCUs) which range from a single word such as *yes* to a full sentence. However, the latter component describes how transitions between speakers are organised. Lerner (2003) indicates that either the current speaker selects the next-speaker or the next speaker self-selects. The rules that combine these two types of components are also related to the organisation of turn-taking within conversation (for more details, see Sacks et al., 1974, p. 704). Turn-taking can therefore “organise distribution of opportunities to talk among parties” (Schegloff et al., 2002). The present study relies on the turn-taking system to analyse how participants interact with each other. For example, the description of turn-taking in desk-talk occurring beyond the classroom discussion provides data on the way in which participants allocate turns to each other (chapter six). They are either self-selected to take a turn or they are prompted by students sitting next to them. The analysis of turn-taking in this study is also needed to describe various types of sequences of embodied action occurring during classroom discussion to explain how student movements are related to the ongoing activity, as in chapter five.

This study also follows intersubjectivity in which CA works on to describe social practices (see sections 3.2 of this chapter and 5.3.3 of chapter two) for analysing talk in-interaction and sequences of actions. Within interactions with

each other, participants display how they understand the situation they are engaged in and their participation status within the ongoing activity. In fact, participants are often aware of only what they say and do, but they do not have access to what co-participants mean. The analyst, therefore, should rely on what matters for the participants in the interaction. This is by providing what actually occurs through a turn-by-turn basis, because a turn-at-talk often displays the participant's understanding of the prior turn by the co-participant. Moreover, such a dynamic interactional process of turn-at-talk is described in conjunction with different signals of embodied action such as gazing and head nodding in which participants may display their understanding of the interaction from different perspectives. Therefore, participants' understanding should be analysed not only in relation to their utterances, but also in relation to their embodied actions. In this case, embodied action used during interaction is considered to be another factor with spoken data to describe students' participation. Thus, the analyses of turn-taking in conjunction with embodied action as presented in chapter five are used to describe the participants' understanding of classroom participation.

Also, another principle of CA is to analyse interaction according to the participants' own perspectives, that is, an *emic* perspective is adopted (e.g., Schegloff, 1997c). In the emic perspective, conversation analysts describe data from participants' own perspectives, with a particular focus on the self-explicating nature of the local context when participants interact. As Schegloff (1992) states, CA adopts an emic perspective in order to analyse "the orientations and relevancies that participants display to each other through

their interactional conduct” cited in Markee and Kasper (2004, p. 495). Here,

“participant orientations, relevancies, and intersubjectivity are not treated as states of mind that somehow lurk behind the interaction, but as local and sequential accomplishments that must be grounded in empirically observable conversational conduct” (Markee and Kasper 2004, p. 495).

In this way, the emic perspective aims to expose the true social structures of interaction in an open minded and without prior hypotheses and analytic claims in mind. Therefore, this study does not take into account external factors not provided by participants in the talk itself, such as their age, gender, and status. Rather it deals primarily with the internal factors such as turns, pauses and embodied movements to describe participants’ social interaction in relation to the prior action of co-participants. In order to capture such subtleties of classroom interaction, audio and video recordings are utilized for further analysis.

Moreover, this study utilizes transcripts of audio and video recordings to analyse talk in-interaction. According to the CA perspective, transcripts must be as detailed as possible, including even the smallest elements such as micro pauses that participants orient to as relevant and ‘meaningful’, and as part of the ongoing (or projected) action. These details or *members’ methods* (Garfinkel, 1967) are employed by participants to engage in meaningful interaction, and are recognized as such by co-participants. Such details are among the resources that people use to perform the social actions that make up their social lives. Therefore, no element can be excluded from as irrelevant until the analyst knows that it is not relevant to the participants. As Schegloff

(1988) notes, these elements are not 'micro' at all, "they are just the sorts of building blocks out of which talk-in-interaction is fashioned by the parties to it" (p. 100).

### **3. 7. Justifications for using CA in this study**

CA is concerned with the social practices that participants orient to during talk-in-interaction. Accordingly, CA is used as a research method for describing the rules, techniques and procedures that people rely on to perform the actions that constitute their social lives. As mentioned above in section 3.3, CA is a data-driven method in which descriptions do not start from a priori categories or hypotheses or from a general theoretical framework. Rather, its descriptions begin from the analysis of recorded sequences of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction in order to study specific aspects of that interaction. The advantage of recording the interaction is not only to enable the analyst to replay it repeatedly or pause it for close analysis, but also to allow other researchers to access the recordings in order to conduct the analysis again or make comparisons.

To analyse the actions that people rely on to constitute their social lives, CA adopts qualitative research methods, which are subject to the evaluation criteria used in social research (Markee, 2000, p. 26). The major principles used to evaluate social research, according to Bryman (2008), are: *reliability*, *replication* and *validity*. Seedhouse (2004) also positions CA in relation to several social concepts confirming that "all CA work has been (on one level) an attempt at a process exposition of what exactly is involved in and meant by

ensuring *validity* and *reliability* in the analysis of talk” (italic is added, p. 254). Therefore, two methodological concepts that are particularly relevant to qualitative research are validity and reliability (Seedhouse 2004, p. 253). These two concepts are introduced in the following sections not only because they have shaped the methodological principles set forth by qualitative researchers such as conversation analysts, but they also provide support for the interpretations in this thesis.

### **3. 7. 1. Validity**

There are several types of validity related to qualitative research. Seedhouse (2004) refers to four kinds of validity: *internal*, *external*, *ecological*, and *construct validity* (see also Bryman, 2008). These four types of validity are discussed below as proposed by Seedhouse (2004):

The first type of *internal validity* relates to the *soundness*, *integrity*, and *credibility* of findings. Internal validity concerns whether or not the data prove the analyst’s interpretation or if there is an alternative explanation. The CA procedures are based on the emic perspective of investigating data from the participants’ perspectives rather than from that of the analysts. This confirms that the emphasis is on the participants’ perspectives through analysing the sequential organisation of talk-in-interaction, and this can maintain internal validity. Seedhouse (2005) argues that CA practitioners “cannot make any claims beyond what is demonstrated by the interactional detail without destroying the emic perspective and hence the whole internal validity of the enterprise” (p. 255).



The second type of validity is called *external validity*. This is concerned with generalisability or “the extent to which findings can be generalised beyond a specific research context” (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 256; see also Bryman, 2008, p.33). Although qualitative research is often criticised for being context-bound and thus weak in terms of external validity, generalisability in CA is closely dependent on the type of conversation analytic research being conducted (Peräkylä, 1997, quoted in Seedhouse, 2004, p. 256). CA research in a specific setting may provide a generalisable description of the interaction in that setting. Therefore, CA studies of institutional discourse, which explicate the organization of micro-interaction in an institutional setting, may provide a generalisable description as rationally organised in relation to institutional goals (*ibid*). For example, Seedhouse’s (2004) study of an institutional setting revealed that a reflexive relationship between pedagogy and interaction is a generalisable feature of L2 classroom interaction. He argued that this relationship is a universal feature of L2 classroom interaction since it is directly connected to an institutional goal which is always the same in all L2 classroom interactions (p. 256). Since the data obtained for the current study were collected from the institutional setting of classroom interaction, the findings may be similar to those obtained in the same settings. In this study, the results of the analysis of talk-in-interaction in EFL classroom are derived from an examination of the ‘machinery’ in which individual instances of interaction are produced. As cited in Seedhouse (2004), Benson and Hughes (1991) explain that:

“the point of working with actual occurrences, single instances, single events, is to see them as the products of a ‘machinery’... to generate formal descriptions of social actions which preserve and display the features of the machinery which produced them” (p. 256).

The third type is *ecological validity*. This type of validity is concerned with “whether findings are applicable to people’s everyday life” (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 256). Here CA can be considered as a strong method as compared to the other methodological approaches, because conversation analysts do not use data from interviews, focus groups, or any other participant induced methods (see e.g., ten Have, 2007). Rather, they mainly depend on recordings of naturally occurring talk in its authentic social setting. From the emic perspective, CA refers to the same interactional organization that participants themselves use to describe how the participants perform social action through talk. For example, Seedhouse’s (2004) study is not based on pedagogical recommendations produced by theorists, but evidence of what teachers actually do in the classroom. The present study is also based on describing what students actually do during classroom interaction, rather than what teachers do.

The fourth type of validity is *construct validity*, which in CA can be evaluated by considering whether or not a measure is reliable according to the emic rather than the etic paradigm. Conversation analysts do not match the surface linguistic features of an interaction to their own constructs and categories, but precisely describe the organisation that participants orient to during interaction (Seedhouse, 2004). These interactional features are only analysable emically as social actions. The use of an emic perspective therefore ensures that there

is no risk of the data being contaminated by existing theories, external factors or the analyst's perspective. The TCUs, as previously explained in section 3.2.2 of chapter two, is a good example of construct validity. As Seedhouse (2004) notes, "the 'construct' of the TCU ... is an interactant's construct rather than an analyst's one, and it is not ethically specifiable" (p. 257).

More examples and further explanation of these four types of validity related to CA as a qualitative research are provided in Seedhouse (2004, pp. 253-257; see also Bryman, 2008, p. 31).

### **3. 7. 2. Reliability**

Another important methodological concept related to the relevance of qualitative research is the *reliability* of its findings. According to Peräkylä (1997 cited in Seedhouse, 2004, p. 254), a key factor relating to reliability in CA is the selection of recordings and the adequacy of transcripts (see also ten Have 2007). In effect, data should be recorded and transcribed properly to enable the analyst and other researchers to conduct analysis and make comparisons. By obtaining transcripts which include all details, these can be repeatedly used to analyse and interpret the data. The second issue of reliability concerns "whether the results of a study are repeatable or replicable" (ibid, p. 254). In this respect, CA studies are completely different from many other research methodologies which do not require the primary data to be freely available. However, the standard practice in CA research is to make transcripts of data electronically available with audio and video files for readers and other researchers via the internet. This means that readers

can analyse the data themselves and examine the validity of the author's analysis and claims. Another aspect of affecting reliability in CA is the practice displaying and presenting data and analyses to other practitioners before publication. Seedhouse (2004) explains that:

“it is standard practice for CA practitioners to take their data and analyses to data workshops and to send their work to a number of other practitioners for comment before sending them for publication” (p. 255).

All of these aspects of reliability in CA research discussed above have been taken into account in the present study. Data in this study have been collected with a high technical quality of recordings. Digital video camera and digital audio players were used to obtain good quality data, as specified below. The data were also transcribed with all details included from the recordings. Moreover, regular presentations of different samples and extracts of data have been made during Newcastle University as well as at international conferences. In Newcastle University, a number of samples have been presented as part of research community of workshops called Micro-Analysis Research Group (MARG) guided by Professor Paul Seedhouse and other university staff members. Some other samples of data have been shown in London and Germany as a contribution to different conferences.

### **3. 8. Limitations of CA**

According to the discussion above, CA can be considered a strong method compared with other methods because it depends mainly on recordings of naturally occurring talk in authentic social settings rather than employing data

from interviews, focus groups, or any other participant inducing method. However, some features of CA lead to some paradoxical situations. From the emic perspective, CA deals with only members' own perspectives in analysing the data from each interaction. Therefore, any influence of external factors such as age, gender or status is ignored. CA focuses solely on the interactional details from the participants' own perspective that might not recur. Therefore, the findings may lack external validity or generalisability as explained above in 3. 7.1.

In terms of presentations and publications, CA often relies on transcripts only rather than recordings. In this case, issues such as embodied actions or physical aspects may also need to be included in transcriptions. Moreover, the obtained recordings sometimes are not exactly similar to the real social interaction. Hammersley (2003) states that details of shot occur before and after recordings should be included, because what is 'picked up' or 'in shot' is only part of a wider realm of happenings. He also claims that participants may not orient to recorded events in the same way that they orient to unrecorded social interaction (p. 759).

Another limitation of CA is its relation to SLA. CA is a behavioural discipline that concerns itself with neither the unobservable nor with documentation methods (see, e.g., Markee, 2004, p. 496). In terms of unobservable, language learning clearly involves more than just what is observable, as confirmed by various researchers such as de Guerrero (1994) and Ellis (1995). De Guerrero (1994), for instance, adopts a socio-cultural approach to

examine the language learning characteristics of inner speech. Here, relying only on spoken transcripts would restrict the generalisations that could be made about language learning in relation to inner speech. However, documentation methods such as interviews and questionnaires are not considered reliable in CA where analysts use context-free data and any understanding of context is grounded in the local sequential environment of talk-in-interaction. This obviously limits CA from making any substantial language learning claims.

Although language acquisition can be demonstrated through the competence of interlocutors engaged in talk-in-interaction, some researchers consider CA as unsuitable for investigating language acquisition. Instead it concerns language use, because CA does not have any theory of language learning (Hatch, 1983). Other researchers such as Markee (2000) have attempted to ameliorate this limitation by documenting short-term learning occurrences or interactions that could be seen as particularly conducive to language learning (see also He 2004). These researchers can be seen as applying 'pure' CA rather than compromising between the epistemological perspectives of sociocultural theories of language learning and conversation analytical accounts (Mondada and Pekarek-Doehler, 2004). This controversial limitation of CA and language learning leads to explain how the present research establishes its methodological boundaries. In fact, this study is not centrally concerned with language learning where a theory of language learning must necessarily be applied as explained in section 5.2.3 of chapter two. Rather, the research is centrally concerned with the construct validity of student

participation (see section 3.7.1 above). Therefore, there is no need to apply a theory of language learning, because the main focus is on the sequential, normative, and inferential properties of classroom participation. Thus, as explained in section 5.3.3 of chapter two, the framework in which this thesis is conducted can be seen as applied CA (cf. pure CA; e.g., Schegloff, 1988).

### **3. 9. The rationale for using CA in this study**

In this study, CA is used as the research methodology for various reasons. CA can be used to analyse talk-in-interaction that occurs naturally, including in classroom interaction, where the understanding of context is grounded in the local sequential environment of talk-in-interaction. Due to the ways in which it differs from other discourse analytic approaches (see section 3.5), it was considered more appropriate to use CA to analyse talk-in-interaction in the classroom. CA allows a detailed explanation of how student participation unfolds on a moment-to-moment basis. It also enables to look in detail at the actions that participants perform during interaction, and how they manage classroom interaction locally and organise their turn-taking. Therefore, using CA as a framework to analyse the data may prevent any contamination by the analyst's interpretations or by other preconceptions and theories.

#### **4. Summary**

This chapter described in some detail the methodological framework of this research. The chapter started by highlighting the purpose of the study and the research questions to be answered. Then, an overview of methodological aspects in CA, including definitions and aims, epistemological concerns and differences between CA and the other analytical approaches, was presented. The applications, justifications, and limitations of the use of CA were discussed, followed by the rationale for using CA in this research.

The subsequent chapter (four) is constituted to provide the methodological aspects of research design. The chapter explains the procedures followed in this research. This included a description of the participants, and data collection, selection, transcription and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study.



## **Chapter Four**

### **METHODOLOGY: Research Design**

Chapter four provides an overview of how the present study has been designed. The chapter presents the procedures followed in this research, providing a description of the participants, and methods of data collection and analysis. A detailed discussion of the transcription process and the selection of data for analysis is also provided. The chapter concludes by discussing the limitations of this study relating to economic, practical and technological constraints.

## **1. Introduction**

As discussed in the previous chapter, CA can be considered as a relevant approach to describe student participation due to its inherently social and interactional philosophy. Chapter three above explained how CA aims to describe social interaction between participants, and how this relates to the analysis of participation in classroom interaction. It provided an idea about how to deal with data through the CA framework. Some issues such as the definition of terms, basic aims and epistemology of CA were also discussed along with the way data are interpreted in this thesis. Therefore, the focus of the previous chapter was to present a foundation for data analysis rather than providing detailed information on CA.

As a next major discussion, the present chapter explains the methodological procedures employed in this study. A full description of the setting and participants is provided. This discussion also includes how data were collected, selected, transcribed, and analysed. The measurements of validity and reliability required when using CA are also discussed, and the chapter ends with the limitations of this study, relating to economical, practical and technological issues.

## **2. Procedures Used in this Study**

In order to answer the research questions, various procedures and dependable methods were chosen to collect and analyse the data. This section describes the research setting and associated ethical issues, the participants in the study, as well as an overview of the procedures used for

data collection and analysis. Finally, the methodological limitations of this research are considered.

## **2. 1. Research setting and ethical issues**

This study describes student participation in an advanced level, adult EFL classroom in English language departments at two universities. The students were arranged in several seating patterns in their classrooms, including rows, circles, and U-shapes facing the teacher. Data were gathered in January and February 2009 during the first semester of the academic year at Tripoli and Misurata Universities in Libya. The class teachers were asked first to participate in the study. To avoid wasting time and facing practical difficulties, some teachers were informed in advance about the need for video recordings, and they agreed to make preparations for this. Then, the students in their classes were accessed through the classroom teacher. All participants were asked to be as spontaneous as they could and to act naturally during lesson recordings.

At the beginning of the first recording sessions, the present researcher was introduced to the students by the teacher, and explained the purpose of the study. Consent forms were distributed which also gave detailed information about the research and assured confidentiality (see appendix 2). Participants were given time to read the form before it was read aloud. Because the students were at the advanced level of English, translations of the consent forms were not prepared. The students were asked if they had any questions (there were a few questions about the nature of the research). Then, they

were asked to complete the consent forms indicating their agreement to participate in the study. At the same time, participants were assured that the data collected would be treated with full confidentiality. For this reason, participants' names were changed in all extracts used for presentations and analyses in this thesis. Most of the students signed the permission slip of the informed consent documentation, agreeing to be videotaped for this research. Students who refused to be filmed had been put aside in the classroom, sitting away from the camera and recording process. Such a problem was only found in two classes with few numbers of students.

## 2. 2. Participants

The participants in this study were, at the time of the recordings, second and third-year English department students during the academic year 2009. They were both female and male between the ages of 19 to 21 years and were chosen from two universities in two different cities in Libya: Tripoli University in Tripoli and Misurata University in Misurata. Some information on the participating students is shown in table 4.1:

**Table 4.1: Student Demographic Information**

Class	University	Level	No.	Nationality	Seating
C 1	Tripoli	Year 2	26	Libyan + one Iraqi	Rows
C 2	Tripoli	Year 2	32	Libyan	Rows
C 3	Misurata	Year 2	35	Libyan + one Egyptian	U-shape
C 4	Misurata	Year 3	25	Libyan + one Iraqi	Circles
C 5	Misurata	Year 3	20	Libyan	Circles
C 6	Misurata	Year 3	25	Libyan	U-shape

The teachers participating in this study were both Libyan and foreigners, and all were non-native speakers of English. They taught English as a foreign language (EFL) in Libya and they were all highly qualified, holding PhD and/or MA degrees in English language teaching. Table 4.2 gives information on the participating teachers and their recorded class:

**Table 4.2: Teacher Demographic Information**

Class	University	Nationality	Qualification	Gender
C 1	Tripoli	Libyan	PhD	Male
C 2	Tripoli	Libyan	MA	Female
C 3	Misurata	Philippine	MA	Male
C 4	Misurata	Iraqi	MA	Female
C 5	Misurata	Philippine	MA	Male
C 6	Misurata	Libyan	PhD	Male

### **2. 3. Data collection**

This section describes how data were collected. Following the framework of conversation analysis, data on naturally occurring social practices can be collected by video and/or audio recordings of talk-in-interaction. As ten Have (2007) indicates, CA is an inductive method and the initial step is therefore to collect data through audio and video digital recordings. In this study, such data were collected from six classrooms in two universities. Each classroom was recorded on two occasions and some of them three times using a video camera mounted on a tripod and placed in the front corner of the classroom. In addition, a number of small digital recorders were used to capture audio tracks from different positions in the classroom. A total of fourteen lessons

were recorded, each of which was approximately 60 minutes long. Table 4.3 below provides more details on the recordings:

**Table 4.3: Recording Information**

Class	University	Lesson	No of recordings	Date
C 1	Tripoli	Phonetics	3	13/01/09
				20/01/09
				03/02/09
C 2	Tripoli	Reading comprehension	2	21/01/09
				04/02/09
C 3	Misurata	Research methods	3	22/01/09
				29/01/09
				05/02/09
C 4	Misurata	Listening comprehension	2	26/01/09
				09/02/09
C 5	Misurata	Speaking skills	2	27/01/09
				10/02/09
C 6	Misurata	Linguistics	2	28/01/09
				11/02/09

During the recording process, the present researcher remained inside the classroom to observe and adjust the recording instruments where necessary. This allowed instances of whole group work to be kept track of for later follow-up. Attendance at recordings was especially helpful during the review of the video recordings. From the very first session, it was noticed that extended sequences of desk talk were taking place among students in different parts of the classroom. Therefore, it was decided to capture these desk utterances because it seemed likely that they were related to the ongoing interaction. For this reason, the number of audio recorders was increased to five for each class, instead of operating only two audio recorders, and these were distributed in different areas of the classrooms.

In fact, the visual and audio recordings together provide a wealth of contextual information which is extremely helpful in the analysis of interactional talk especially in complex settings with more than a few speakers (ten Have, 2007, p. 72). However, relying only on this type of data has been widely debated within CA and by its critics. CA researchers insist on the use of audio or video recordings because they believe that this type of data is imperative in such studies. They also consider that other common data sources such as interviews and observations are “too much a product of the researcher’s or informant’s manipulation, selection, or reconstruction based on preconceived notions of what is probable or important” (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984, p.2-3). Moreover, Sacks (1992, p. 419) states that recorded data, compared to other sources, are rich in empirical detail which could never be produced by anybody’s imagination.

Therefore, video and audio recordings were used in order to increase the chances of conducting in-depth analysis to understand the hybrid social action units of conversation and embodied action among large numbers of students in the classrooms.

### **2. 3. 1. Video recordings**

The data for this research comprise of video recordings of real classroom lessons of English as a foreign language. In order to have a good quality of data, the video recordings were made by means of digital camera. The recordings were digitized and named according to the language learning department and date. A total of approximately 14 hours of video recording

constitute the database for this thesis. Each lesson was videotaped with a JVC digital video camera positioned towards the front of the room to capture the students rather than the teacher. The researcher was operated the camera in an attempt to capture as many students as possible, given the importance of all students' faces, gestures and eye gazes in conversation analysis (Markee, 2008).

All of the video recordings have been retained in the researcher's own computer hard drive, USB flash memory drive, and on DVD discs. Copies of the DVDs were also submitted to the research supervisor. The video recordings were initially used for reviewing all of the data, and then extracts which were considered more relevant to this study were selected and compressed into Quick Time files for easier access during transcription and analysis.

### **2. 3. 2. Audio recordings**

Olympus Digital Wave recorders were used in order to produce a higher quality of audio recordings of interactions than the video recordings could offer. The lessons were recorded with a set of recorders distributed among the participants' desks in order to capture as many student utterances as possible. The database for the audio recordings was similar to video data, constituting a total of approximately 14 hours. The audio data were also downloaded to computer, and each recording was uploaded to a separate file. These files were then digitized and named according to the classroom with the date of the recording. The audio recordings were utilized not only to



capture the utterances among the participants, but were also used during transcription when the audio tracks on the video recordings were unintelligible.

## **2. 4. Data analysis**

After the collection process, data were reviewed by carefully listening to and looking at the recorded material. In some cases, samples of the recorded material were transcribed and then displayed during sessions with several colleagues looking at and discussing the data. On the basis of these sessions, valuable observations were obtained providing new insights relating to the procedure which should be followed in the data analyses.

The main analytic methodology utilized in this study was the application of CA to describe talk-in-interaction, and therefore, the analyses were guided by CA principles in uncovering exactly how EFL students organised their participation in the classroom. As Heap (1997) argues, CA can tell us what to look at, how to look, and what we must do to show how the features of institutions are produced '*in situ*' (p. 223). Thus, following CA framework, the data analysis in the present study was completed in several stages. The initial stage of analysis involved a review of all video and audio recordings following the completion of data collection, in order to identify extracts for analysis. The extracts of interest in this study were identified by the presence of student participation, and special note was made of sequences involving embodied actions and desk talk.

The second stage of analysis involved the transcription of all sample extracts which include student participation and desk talk. Following conversation-analytic methods, the transcriptions were as detailed as possible so that all relevant features of the interactions were included for analysis (see section 4.6 below).

In the third stage of analysis, most of extracts containing student participations which included embodied actions or desk-talk were highlighted in the list of initial transcriptions. These extracts were only utilized throughout the rest of the data collected, because the focus of the current study is mainly on these two types of student participation.

The final stage was that all the selected extracts were analysed in order to identify how students organised their participation in classroom interaction. This is typically done by following exactly the CA principles. Thus, all types of CA sequence organisation and mechanisms such as turn-taking organization, adjacency pairs, sequence types and references were taken into account for analysing participants' embodied actions and desk talk.

#### **2. 4. 1. Analysis of embodied action**

As mentioned early in chapter three above, CA is not only concerned with talk and how it is contextualised between interlocutors, but also with the design and intelligibility of turns-at-talk which rely on a variety of other interactional resources (Psathas, 1995, p. 48; see also Goodwin and Duranti, 1992). These resources include, to name few, the sequential of utterances and the

nonverbal actions performed by participants. In this way, participants produce the physical environment where interaction takes place. They produce various nonverbal behaviours to reflexively negotiate with each other what kind of relationship is constructed and shaped for one another (Goodwin and Duranti, 1992, pp. 6-9). Recently, the study of nonverbal behaviours is referred to as the study of embodiments or embodied actions. These embodiments include, among others, the use of gaze, head and hand gestures, body movement and position (Olsher, 2004, p. 223). CA studies have essentially focused on studying the embodied actions and how they are used in combination with talk-in-interaction (e.g., Goodwin, 1984; Schegloff, 1984). By using CA approach, this type of research on embodiment-in-interaction has recently developed from studying everyday interaction to deal with different institutional and technological interaction. Yet there is no systematic framework to describe how the use of these embodiments figures in and manifests the sequential organisation of interaction (Schegloff, 2007, p. 11).

Since CA focuses on the investigation of social actions and the description of interactional practices where participants collaboratively create interaction in different settings, the analysis of embodied action in this study was dealt with in a combination with talk. This perspective reveals the resources that people rely on in their interaction (see, e.g., Kress and Leeuwen, 2001; Norris and Jones, 2005). Because action is accomplished through the interplay between talk and interaction, it does not make sense to describe these resources separately (see, e.g., Stivers and Sidnell, 2005). This provided another way to investigate the relationship between turns-at-talk and actions.

The analysis of embodied action was also based on the recommendations of Goodwin (2003b) that it should take into account “the physical surroundings, activities, participation frameworks and sequential actions in which they are embedded” (Olsher, 2004, p. 222). Accordingly, the ways in which embodied actions were exploited by participants as the classroom activity is going on were looked at. In this way, the analytical approach should not isolate talk from its environment (Goodwin, 2000a). Thus, the analysis process included a combination of talk and embodied action used by students in the classroom interaction. This is typically done on the basis of CA methodology which can be used for such hybrid objects. The analysis of students’ use of embodied action is presented in chapter five.

#### **2. 4. 2. Analysis of desk-talk**

Desk-talk for classroom participation is defined as turns where students self-select, nominating themselves while the classroom discussion is ongoing. Only those desk turns between two or more students which appeared to be designed as contributions to the ongoing discussion were included in the analysis. Here, student desk utterances were not designed to be part of the whole group discussion, but were aimed only at the student(s) sitting next to the speaker where all other members of the class were not ratified listeners. This excludes instances of ‘private speech’, where turns are not allocated to anybody. One of the criteria taken into account in labelling a turn as part of desk-talk rather than private speech was the volume of the utterance. This is because utterances in desk-talk are not produced by speakers at too low a volume. Rather, these utterances can be judged relative to each student’s

normal volume. Additionally, these utterances defined as desk-talk were judged according to eye gaze and body orientation, since volume alone was insufficient to designate a turn as a desk-talk or private speech. This stage of analysis allowed for a broad view of the data and a deeper understanding of classroom interactions, as shown later in detail. The analysis of students' use of desk-talk beyond the classroom discussion is presented in chapter six.

## **2. 5. Theoretical framework**

The theoretical basis for this research is inspired by the methodology of conversation analysis (CA). More specifically, the study is carried out within a framework guided by applied CA (see section 5.3.3 of chapter two), since this research puts more emphasis on analysing social interaction between participants, and how this relates to the analysis of participation in classroom interaction. Ten Have (2007) states that 'applied CA' can be used to "denote the implicit or even explicit use of CA-inspired studies ... to provide data-based analytic suggestions for, or critiques of, the ways in which social life can be organized" (p. 174). Therefore, CA-informed methodology is used because analysis in this study is not necessarily concerned with specific details of talk mechanisms such as repair, frequency or sequentiality.

The theoretical and analytical methods employed for this study lie mostly within the applied CA framework; since the present study attempts to describe how students organise their participation in the institutional context of classroom settings. This clear focus of CA, as well as the possibility of using it in its own right recommended by researchers (such as Hall 2004), provide the

rationale for choosing CA as the methodology and the conceptual framework for this research.

In addition, the institutional research can show how interaction in institutions differs from that in ordinary conversation (Hester and Francis, 2000, p. 392). For example, turn-taking in ordinary conversation is locally managed, and all participants can self-select to participate where necessary, while turn-taking in classroom interaction operates differently where the teacher has interactional rights (McHoul, 1990). Taking account of this difference, ten Have (2007) argues that pure CA is the study of interaction in its own right, and applied CA is the study of how “interactions with an institutional purpose ... were organized as institutional interactions” (p. 174). This does not necessarily mean, however, that pure and applied CA are divided according to the study of ‘ordinary conversation’ and ‘institutional interaction’ respectively. Rather pure CA is the study of any talk-in-interaction, whatever its context, and applied CA mainly focuses on the organisation of interaction in an institutional setting such as turn-taking; and on “the ways in which the interactants show their orientations to these situations and requirements”, (ten Have, 2007, p. 8).

Moreover, there are many conversation analysts who caution against using CA with a priori theories such as sociocultural theory, arguing that such a pairing goes against “emic epistemology” (Markee, 2008, pp. 406-407). Since the present study aims to describe the complexity of student participation in EFL classroom activity, in order to uncover the nature of such participation in

whole group settings, the research is mainly concerned with the participation process itself rather than with participation as a source of language learning.

## **2. 6. Data selection**

In CA studies, the selection of data for analysis is often guided by 'analytic elaboration' which means to select one feature to be analysed and then the others that are similar or different should be considered (ten Have, 2007, p.146). The strategy followed for data selection in this study was 'comprehensive data treatment' in which the entire data of classroom lessons was initially looked at in a careful way. Then, the analysis started on some small features, arbitrary selected, including different samples of embodied action and desk-talk. These small features were then compared with other data to generate 'a provisional analytic scheme' (ibid). This process was continued until all data were scanned and all related cases were covered. This strategy for data selection, as ten Have (2007) explains, incorporates and systemizes 'deviant case analysis' that seems useful if:

“one tries to formulate a rule-set in order to account for an underlying order in a relatively structured core situation, as Mehan did with classroom discourse, Maynard with negotiations regarding plea bargaining, and, indeed, Schegloff with telephone call openings” (p.146).

Thus, all recordings were carefully observed, and several extracts were selected for analysis and detailed transcription. ten Have (2007) also indicates, some CA analysts begin with a collection of data that they systematically analyse, while others look for moments of special interest, such as examples of turn-taking and holding the floor (p. 38). The latter method

was used in this study to select data for analysis, usually based on the observation that certain features occurred in which embodied actions were exploited by participants while another speaker was talking. For the analysis of desk-talk, however, extracts were chosen that included desk turns and utterances between students which appeared to be related to the ongoing discussion.

## **2. 7. Data transcription**

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the detailed transcription of video and/or audio recordings is an important step in conversation analysis (see, e.g., ten Have, 1999). The purpose of including a range of details in transcription, as stated by Psathas (1995), is to represent the key features of talk, including pauses, sound stretches, and emphasis (p.12). Having all details of natural talk in written form is helpful for CA analysts in presenting the phenomena of interest and capturing relevant data for analysis (ten Have, 2007, p.95). This is subsequently followed by the annotation of nonverbal movements. Whenever technically possible, the coordination between verbal interaction and movements made by different parts of students' bodies was taken into account. In this way, the transcription process starts with the presentation of verbal features from a conversational Analytic perspective and then develops to coordinate with nonverbal units.

However, transcripts do not always constitute the whole data and they are usually incomplete (see e.g., Jefferson, 1996). They are often changed when analysts present the data to other researchers for review. Even perfect



transcripts may often be modified because people may hear it different from original recordings. Therefore, transcripts are always considered to be a representation of the data, while the actual data is the video/audio recording itself of the natural talk as it occurred during the social event (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998).

The CA transcripts represent all aspects of interaction, such as overlaps, emphasis, laughter, and numbered lines (Psathas, 1995, pp. 71-78). The transcription conventions used in this study were developed by Gail Jefferson (see also, e.g., Atkinson and Heritage, 1984; Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998). Appendix 1 contains a full list of the transcription conventions used in this research, which were as detailed as possible so that all relevant features of the interactions were included for analysis. Most analysts use standard orthography rather than phonetic transcription, due to the requirements accessibility to other readers, and so phonetic transcriptions of student talk are only provided in the extracts which include phonetic sounds uttered during phonetic lessons. Phonetic transcription may also be provided when participants orient to someone's pronunciation in a non-standard way; for example, in explicit pronunciation correction.

### **2. 7. 1. Transcription of the visual aspects**

Transcription of visual aspects is basically needed in this study to show how the meaning of verbal contributions and the form of body movements are interrelated. More specifically, it identifies the conversational functions of certain features of speech. Through such transcription, the presence of

possible relationship between the identified verbal signals and co-verbal actions is exposed. Moreover, transcription of visual aspects is used to describe other meanings and functions of embodied action based on correspondences found between speech and nonverbal movements, considering the interactional context.

In order to properly describe the embodied actions of the interaction, the visual aspects needed to be transcribed in a set of written symbols comparable to those used for the vocal talk. Goodwin (2001) reveals that “marking those distinctions with written symbols, that extends back thousands of years and is still being modified today ....When it comes to the transcription of visual phenomena” (p, 160). These visual symbols play an important role within CA studies as they maintain the sequential aspects of embodied action in combination with the vocal part of the interaction. As ten Have (2007) describes:

“The basic procedure used in CA studies based on video recordings has been to start with a detailed transcription of the vocal part of the interaction, and add descriptions or symbolic depictions of the visual activities, like gaze, gesture, posture, and others, to the ‘timeline’ provided by the transcript, either above or below each line.” (p. 108)

Researchers working with video materials, such as Goodwin (1979, 1981, 1984), and Heath (1984, 1986), have developed and utilized visual coding in different ways. For example, Goodwin (1981) used the following marks to transcribe the gaze of the participants:

(...)	Turning the head towards the co-participant
( __ )	The participant is gazing at the co-participant
X	The point where the gaze reaches the co-participant
(,,)	The participant withdraws the gaze from the co-participant

These marks are used to transcribe the visual aspects, such as gazes which exemplified in the following:

**Figure 4.1: Example of written codes for visual transcription**

A: \_\_\_\_\_,,,,,,  
 We went down to- (0.2) When we went back ...  
 [  
 B: ...X\_\_\_\_\_

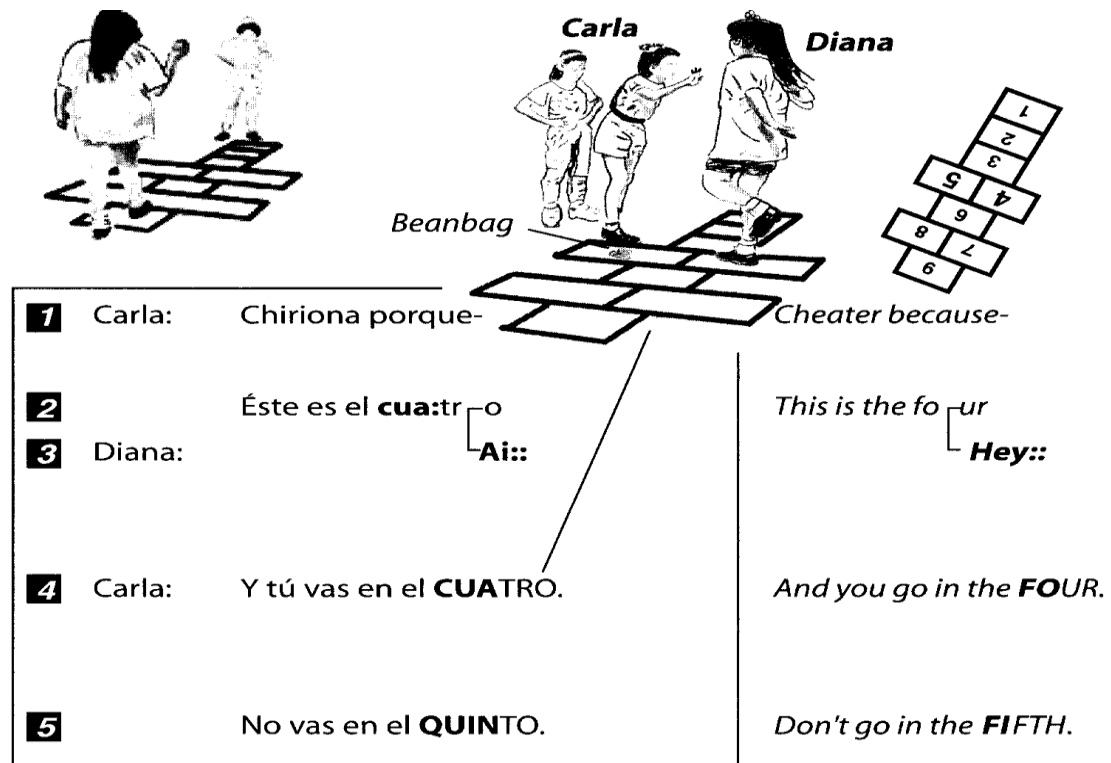
(Source: Goodwin, 1981, p. 52)

Similarly, Sahlström (1999, 2002) used a similar technique in his analysis of hand-raising in classrooms, but used drawings of hands and their position in relation to the verbal talk instead of symbolic representations like colons and dots. Although both of these studies used intelligible symbols in transcribing some visual aspects of interaction, other details such as gesture, posture, and participants' positions with respect to one another were excluded.

Other kinds of data transcription have been adopted by different researchers to describe visual aspects of interaction which include more information about the participants (see, e.g., Heath, 1986, Goodwin, 2000a). Some employ drawings on the basis of the original video recordings, as can be seen in

figure 4.2:

**Figure 4.2: Example of drawings for visual aspects**



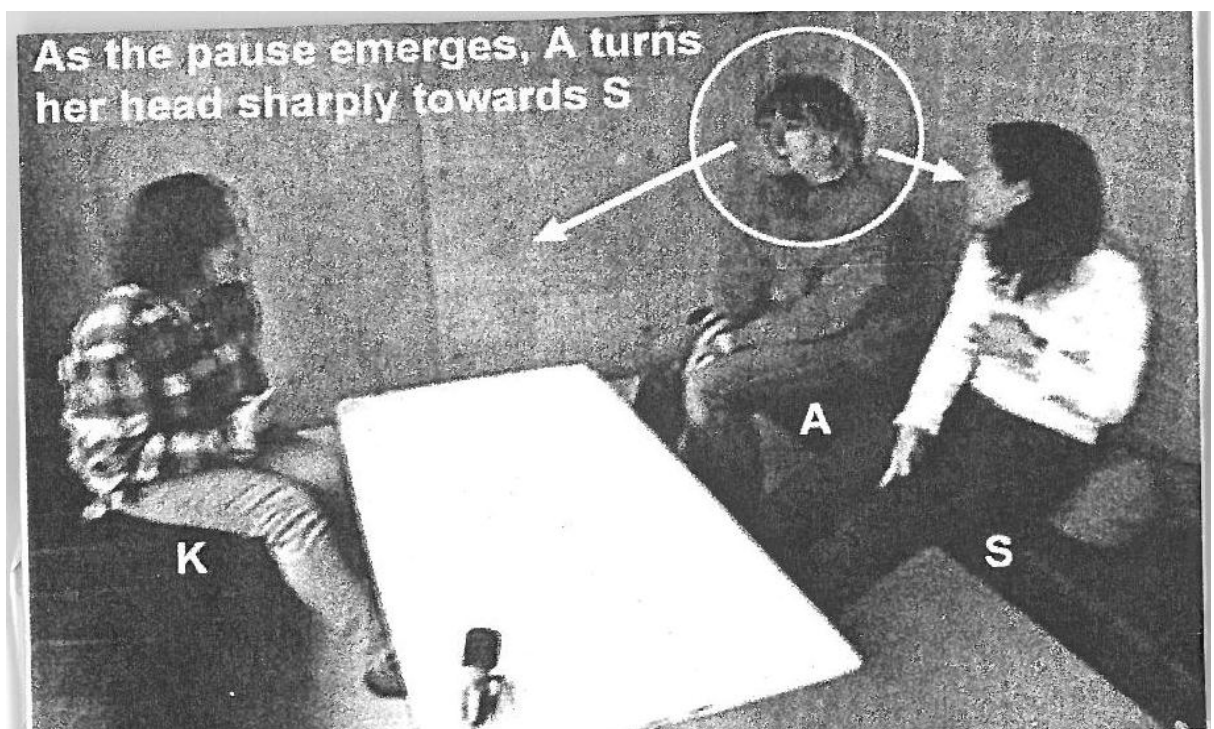
(Source: Goodwin, 2000a, p. 1494)

These drawing techniques accurately represent visual information as well as maintaining the ‘anonymity’ of the participants (ten Have, 2007, p. 109). Another advantage of this technique is that all visual details are separately provided alongside the transcription of vocal talk to provide arguments of the analysis.

The most recent and possibly the best method used by researchers to provide all possible information of the visual aspects of interaction is called ‘*frame grabs*’ or ‘*digitized frames*’ taken from video recordings (see e.g., Goodwin, 2003b; Hindmarsh and Heath, 2003; Carroll, 2004; Olsher, 2004; Goodwin

and Goodwin, 2005; Kidwell, 2005). Now, in addition to the verbal transcripts, sequences of visual aspects are presented in real pictures from the real situation. Moreover, explanatory signs such as arrows to address gaze direction and circles to highlight specific points can be added using computing techniques. As ten Have (2007) points out, “the digitized frame pictures allow for the addition of explicative symbols like arrows (who speaks to whom) and initials” (p, 109). This method of transcribing visual aspects is shown in figure 4.3:

**Figure 4.3: Example of digitized frame for visual aspects**



(Source: Carroll, 2004, p. 215)

This method using digitized frame pictures was adopted in the present study in order to anchor all visual information to specific positions in the transcription. At the same time, arrows and circles were added to highlight the

presence and direction of embodied actions, as can be clearly seen in chapter five.

### **2. 7. 2. Transcription of desk talk**

Most utterances in the desk talk in this study were produced by participants in their mother tongue, the Arabic language. Therefore, the translation of these utterances was essential for the purpose of transcription. However, the translation of transcriptions is difficult (ten Have, 2007, p. 109), and the translations of these desk utterances were, at best, an approximation of the original data.

Also, as ten Have (2007) explains, there are several ways to present translated material in the publications. Sometimes it is only presented in translation, or it may be presented in the original language alongside the translation, (pp. 109-110). In the present study, all Arabic desk turns are presented in the original language first, accompanied by an English translation below, line by line as shown in chapter six.

## **5. Limitations**

A number of limitations were identified in this research that needs to be considered in further studies. These related to different factors such as economic, practical and technological constraints, and the sample size of participants. First of all, the high quality of digital video recording required meant that an expensive camera was used for data collection. For this reason, only one camera was used, but greater video coverage of classrooms

using multiple cameras would have been too costly.

Other practical and technological issues also affected the use of video and audio equipments. Since the main purpose of this study is to describe how participants organise their participation with respect to ongoing action in the classroom (see chapter three, section 2), the camera was directed towards the whole class rather than towards the teacher or the desks of individuals (see Goodwin, 1994; Mondada, 2007). Therefore, the focus was mainly on the embodied actions and social organization of the participants rather than on their interaction with teachers. Unfortunately, the video equipment only provided limited possibilities for zooming in on participants, and so the recordings were not always good enough to capture all embodied actions in full detail. To solve such problems, the classroom would need to be provided with a number of high quality cameras. The quality of audio recordings was also far from ideal model of data. The digital mini-recorders distributed among students provided large volumes of data, but some utterances were unintelligible and the audio recordings did not capture every item of students' talk, occurring beyond classroom discussion. To fully record all utterances, individual microphones on every single student, as used by Ohta (2000, 2001) would be needed to capture such utterances.

The final limitation relates to the number of participants. Because most of the classes consisted of a large number of students, it was sometimes difficult to analyse participants' talk-in-interaction especially when overlaps occurred and individuals did not give the floor to each other. The turn-taking organisation in

such settings may differ from the traditional interaction patterns where only a few participants are involved. Further studies would be required to overcome this limitation, and more advanced technology should be used.



## **6. Summary**

This chapter described in some detail the methodological framework of research design. The chapter explained the procedures followed in this research. This included a description of the participants, and data collection, selection, transcription and analysis. Finally, the chapter concluded with a discussion of the limitations of this study.

The subsequent chapters constitute the empirical part of the thesis. They analyse student participation by providing detailed examination of specific social interaction in EFL classrooms. Chapter five analyses the organization of embodied actions used by participants in classroom interaction. It provides a framework for understanding how different ways of organizing embodied movements related to ongoing interactional tasks. Then chapter six describes a specific type of student engagement. Desk utterances are widely employed by most participants, but occur beyond the explicit classroom discussion. The chapter describes how these desk turns are directly related to the classroom oral discussion, and are often solicited by student prompts for responses. However, they may also be unsolicited, where students self-select as participants. The chapter also explains how these types of desk turns, create good opportunities for students to organize their engagements in the same way as the explicit discussion does, so that they can be seen as an alternative mode of involvement in ongoing activities.

## **Chapter Five**

### **EMBODIED ACTION**

This chapter describes a specific type of social practice shown by non-native speakers during plenary interactions in EFL classrooms: the embodied movements during turns-at-talk as a sequential action of classroom participation. It argues that student participation is not only organised by the turn-taking process but also by using embodied movements. The chapter starts by describing how students employ different types of embodiment at the same time in order to participate in the ongoing discussion. It then goes on to describe how most of the students use similar kinds of embodiments so as to be participating in the ongoing activities.

## **1. Introduction**

This chapter analyses the organisation of student participation in ongoing classroom activities, giving special attention to the participants' body movements and orientation. It shows the movements that students normally employ while participating in interaction. The description of these movements adds to our understanding of the types of participation occurring among large group of students in EFL classrooms. Students' embodied actions are analysed during a specific context when turns-at-talk are in-progress, showing how participants orientate to the ongoing discussion using several different embodied signals. This analysis is conducted by choosing specific turns-at-talk, and then at specific point of these turns, capturing digitized frames from the video recording and describing the action taking place through embodied display (see 2.6. in chapter four). This chapter therefore is mainly concerned with the ways that embodied action relates to turn-taking and the sequential organisation of talk-in-interaction.

## **2. Talk and Embodied Action**

Talk is usually the most important factor in the social interaction which people participate in, and which builds their social world. However, social interaction also includes the monitoring of co-participants' displays relating to participation. In this way, the speaker's talk and the hearer's display are both crucial aspects of the interaction. To understand the ways people organise and sustain face-to-face interaction, "observable behaviours" must be considered in the analysis process, including "where they look, when they speak or remain silent, how they move how they manage their faces, how

they orient to one another, and how they position themselves spatially” (Kendon, 1990, p. 3). This kind of interactional construction has previously been researched by CA analysts. For example, Goodwin (2000c) explains how a hearer's embodied action affects the speaker's talk. It is clear from this perspective that the role of non-speaker participants is not passive. Rather, they are fundamentally contributing to the current talk according to turn-taking organisation they hear.

Within the field of the use of embodied actions and the ways they are coordinated with talk, several aspects have been examined. For instance, gaze patterns, among others, are used to indicate commitment to talk and to regulate people's orientation towards one another (Goffman, 1964), to give speakers time to organise their contribution (Kendon, 1967), to ensure a smooth flow of conversation between two or more interlocutors (Goodwin, 1986, 1980), to show or elicit the reciprocity (Heath, 1984), and to foreground the communicative intention of a gesture (Streeck, 1993). Other studies have also found that gaze patterns play a very important role in the negotiation of participation frameworks (see, e.g., Goodwin, 2002; Kendon, 1990 [1985]). This research explains how gaze is deployed to indicate degrees of student participation or engagement in ongoing talk. As Goodwin (2002) puts it, “participants can mark alternative states of engagement and disengagement ... through phenomena such as gaze toward or away from their co-participants” (p. 38).

Another example of the use of embodied actions and the way they are coordinated with talk is body orientation using the torso and legs. Some studies (see, e.g. Goodwin, 1981; Kendon, 1990[1985]) have analysed participants' deployment of body orientation to describe different levels of engagement or disengagement in sequential actions. From this perspective, how body orientation is manipulated in such a way as to convey that an interlocutor is ready for collaborative action, or to negotiate participation frameworks can be described (see also Goodwin, 1987; Schegloff, 1987). According to Schegloff (2007), one way in which participants signal to one another their availability to interact during the initial phase of a conversational encounter is through non-verbal cues such as mutual gaze and body orientation.

As the literature reviewed above suggests, embodied actions are crucial for the speaker and hearer during turn-taking. For instance, Jefferson's (1984) study on the timing of 'overlap onset', and Lerner's (1996) research on 'anticipatory completions' of one speaker's turn by another speaker reveal the projectability of turns-in-progress which allows another speaker to respond before the ongoing turn has reached its grammatical completion. It is this projectability of turns-in-progress that allows co-participants to employ the embodied actions described in the present chapter as a way to be participating in and to understand what is going on. Goffman (1963a) has also stated that an individual participant who is the immediate focus of attention can provide co-participants with a framework to determine to what extent that individual participant is available for focused interaction. In this regard, the

relationship between “speaker” and “hearer” reflects to what extent reciprocity has been established.

### **3. Turn-taking and Embodied Action**

The coordination of turn-taking with embodied action for analysing data has been dealt with from different perspectives. For example, Olsner (2004) has analysed embodied actions used by participants to complete turns in non-native speakers' interaction. Some studies (see, e.g., Goodwin, 1981; Heath, 1986; Kidwell, 1997) have also analysed how speakers construct their turn-taking to establish reciprocity with co-participants. In this chapter, however, embodied action used for classroom participation is considered. The focus is mainly on how EFL learners organise their participation through the means of body movements when turns-at-talk are in-progress.

Previous studies of talk coordinated with embodiments have often focused on the openings and closings of turn-taking rather than the period when turn-taking is in progress (see, e.g., Mortensen, 2008; Cekaite, 2008). The study of conversational openings and closings is a very well established area of research among conversation analysts (Alwiya, 1992; Hopper, 1989; Hopper et al., 1991; Lindstrom, 1994; Robinson, 1998; Coronel-Molina, 1998). Several aspects of openings and closings have attracted the attention of such conversation analysts, including the way sequences are initiated, how the turn-taking system is managed, and the role of non-verbal action in initiating or terminating encounters. The present study, however, seeks to explain how embodiments are organised during turns-at-talk in order to participate in

interactional tasks in EFL classrooms. The analysis in this study is based on the idea suggested by Goodwin (1984) that participants' perspectives should be obtained by conducting a deep analysis of the actions they perform as talk is ongoing (p., 243). To my knowledge, no previous study has explained how these embodied actions represent student participation when turn-taking is in progress, especially in such contexts of large groups of EFL learners. All of the studies cited above were conducted with either native speakers of English or small groups. Thus, the current study contributes to the body of research into the coordination of talk with embodied action in exploring student participation in the context of English as a foreign language, showing how participants establish these embodiments during the progress of turns-at-talk in classroom interaction. This study also contributes to previous research which has illustrated how mutual orientation between co-participants is crucial for talk to emerge (Carroll, 2005a; Goodwin and Goodwin, 2005; Goodwin, 2006; Mondada, 2007). This type of study reveals how talk is an interactional accomplishment during the establishment of the turn-at-talk, as well as within the boundaries of the turn itself and between turns-at-talk (e.g., Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2007; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973).

The analysis of data in this chapter is based on the idea suggested by Goodwin (2000, 2003) that the analysis of interaction should take into account the surrounding environments in which talk is embedded. Since the analytical approach used should not isolate language from its environment (Goodwin, 2000a), the analysis includes combinations of talk and the use of the body in the classroom context.

#### **4. Embodied Action during Classroom Interaction**

As indicated in the introductory chapter (section 2), EFL students are often put in teacher-fronted activities where opportunities for oral participation during classroom discussion are not equally available to all students. As a result, they may employ a range of visible movements to contribute in some way to classroom interaction, such as head nods or shakes, head or arm gestures, or displays of gaze direction, facial expressions or body orientation or position. These embodiments used by students during classroom oral discussion are characterized in this chapter as embodied actions related to the progression of turns-at-talk. Students may resort to this type of participation to orientate themselves to what is around them; and thus, they may use the embodied action more frequently. Also, students may resort to these embodied actions for different purposes, including displays of agreement or disagreement, understanding or misunderstanding, or following up. With these factors in mind, students' embodied actions used during classroom oral interaction are looked at in some detail.

#### **5. The Sequential Locations of Embodied Action**

From the analysis of the data, it seems that students employ embodiments in systematically coordinating with turn-taking at talk. They do generally use these embodiments while the teacher's turns and/or other students' turns are in progress. Moreover, students do not necessarily sustain the same movement during the speaker's turns. Rather, they provide various different movements according to their understanding of the turns produced. This means that the organisation of embodied actions in the plenary interaction is



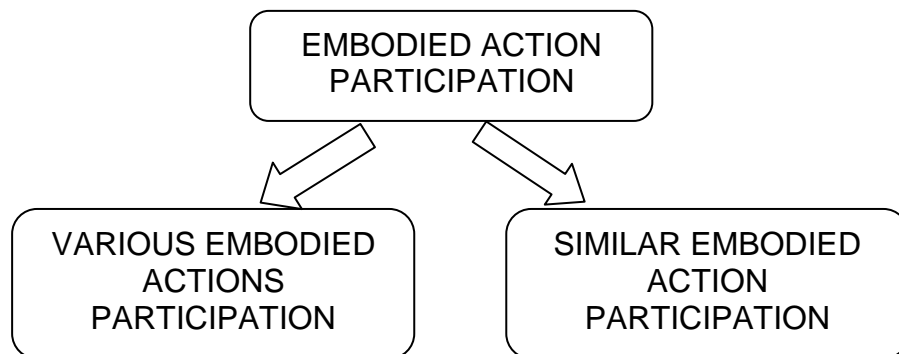
based on student orientation to every turn. In this way, all movements produced by students are relevant to turn-taking in progress, and thus when these turns are overlapped and/or terminated, the embodiments immediately are changed or stopped.

## **6. The use of Embodied Action in this Study**

In this study, the term 'embodied action' indicates movements that participants use or resort to when they want to be engaged and participate in ongoing activities in their classrooms. That is, participants rely on certain embodied actions during the oral activities instead of participating by speaking. These actions include non-verbal cues such as gaze patterns and body orientation. They are employed by students to participate in the ongoing activity.

From data analysis perspective, embodied actions provided by students during the ongoing tasks are classified into two main categories: various movements supplied as individual actions, and similar movements provided by all of the students as one action. In both cases, students utilize such types of participation to cope with the surrounding talk. Figure 5.1 below shows these two categories in which embodied actions are used by students to participate in classroom discussion:

**Figure 5.1: Types of embodied actions as used in classroom activities**

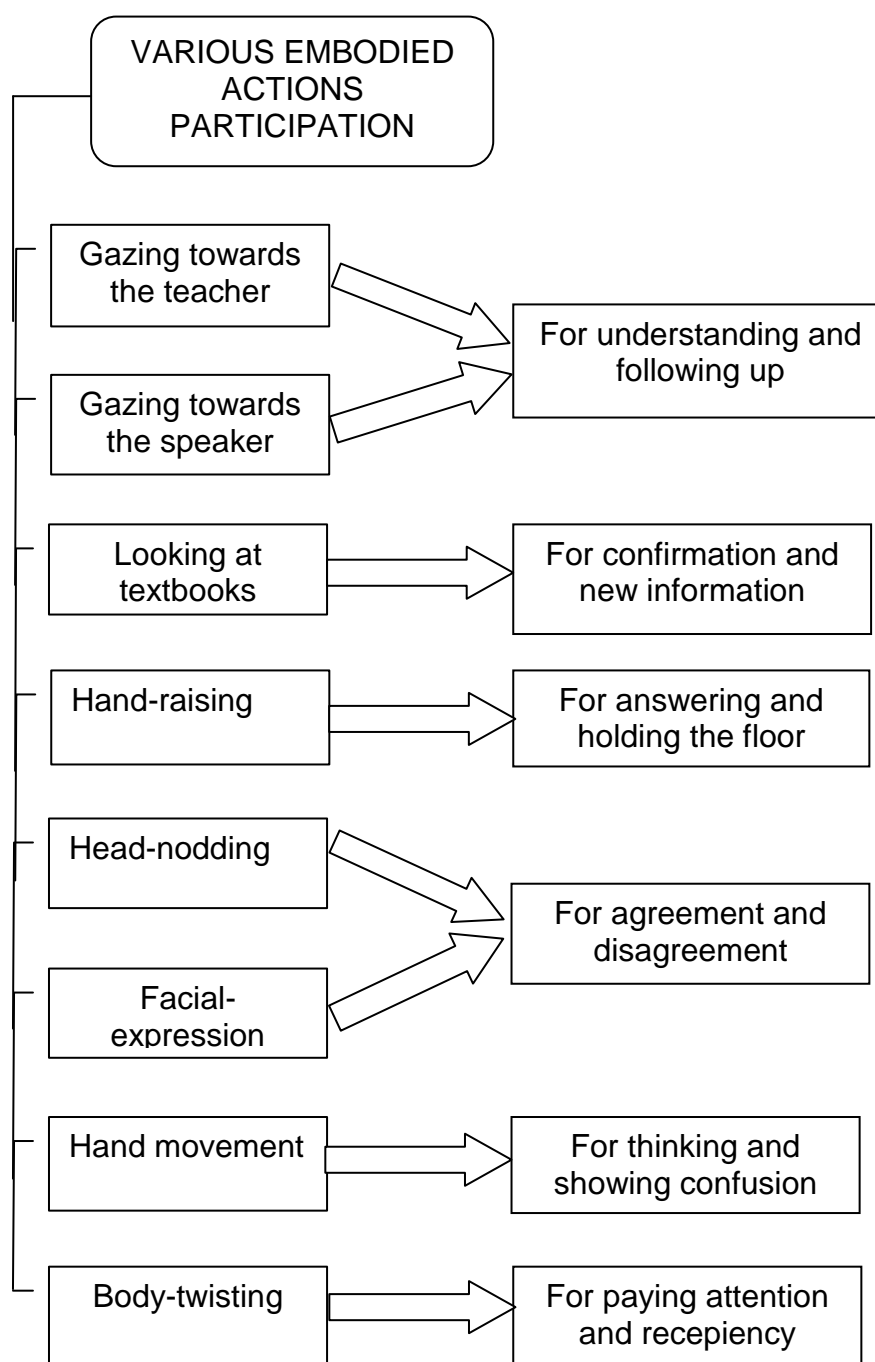


### **6. 1. Various embodied actions for classroom participation**

In the classroom students may potentially express that they are following what is going on through the use of different types of embodied actions. They are participating not only when speaking, but they are also constructing a kind of group participation through the distribution of signals amongst each other. They are gazing, smiling, nodding heads, glancing at each other, and orienting to the teacher when they want to engage in classroom discussion. In this section, student participation is considered to be a sustained engagement in order to understand how participants act as collaborative members (see, e.g., Irvine, 1996; Hanks, 1996; Goodwin and Goodwin, 2005; Goodwin, 2006). From this perspective, students construct a kind of 'ecology' to participate in their classes. They coordinate with each other in a specific sequential environment which produces social actions using "the public visibility of the actions being performed by each others' bodies" (Goodwin, 2000a, p. 1518).

Based on this perspective, participation embodiments include various resources drawn upon in conducting the social actions. Understanding the properties of participation thus requires looking at the physical setting in which participants translate their signals, which cannot be fully described without looking at the extra-bodily environment where it occurs (Goffman, 1964, p. 134). Various embodied actions, from data analysis perspective, are provided by students as different and individual actions during the ongoing tasks. They utilize such type of participation to cope with the surrounding talk. Figure 5.2 below shows these various embodied actions and the purpose they are used for:

**Figure 5.2: Various embodied actions as used for classroom participation**



### 6. 1. 1. Analysing various embodied actions

This section provides the analysis of extracts chosen from the data collected. It attempts to uncover the fundamental actions associated with classroom

participation. In order to do this, the organisation of classroom interaction needs to be analysed and dealt with in detail. By analysing extracts using CA methodology, different issues relating to classroom discussion are widely provided.

The embodied action participation constitutes the major feature for the analysis process. The ways in which embodied actions are exploited by students as a current speaker talk is explored. Two essential requirements here are video-recordings that make the relevant details accessible to the analyst along with precise transcriptions of classroom conversation as it sequentially unfolds in interaction. The following examples taken from the data demonstrate the process used.

Extract 5.1, for example, is taken from the lesson on reading comprehension. Participants were asked to prepare questions for classroom discussion based either on what they have studied in their textbooks or on their previous knowledge. They were divided into groups and each group would ask their question, leading into an open discussion, and then give the right answer. By asking them to create their own questions, the teacher here aimed to regulate class discussion to ensure that most students become involved in classroom participation and engaged more deeply with what is going on:

### Extract 5.1 (Reading comprehension)

- 1 J: yes em where is Rome↑  
2 Teacher: wh:ere↑ is roam↑  
3 J: yeh  
4 Teacher: wh:ere is roam↑ (.) you mean (.) Rome↑  
5 J: → Rome (.) eh (.) I mean↑ we a:ll↑ know Rome is in Italy  
6 Teacher: = in Italy:  
7 E: [yeh]  
8 J: but there is em (.) actually there is em  
9 E: [yes]  
10 Teacher: ok (.) ok (.)  
11 E: sorry .hh.  
12 Teacher: that is ok go ahead  
13 E: em em I: I think heard it: before (.) em I think it is em  
14 in every continent↑ there is: em there is a city called: Rome↓  
15 but: (.) where exactly↓ in the continent. I don't know↓  
16 Teacher: = you don't know  
17 J: = yeh (.) yeh that's correct  
18 Teacher: = so (.) so eh  
19 J: in every country there is a Rome (.) in every country  
20 E: [in every continent↑]  
21 J: continent

In this example, it seems that the speaker (**J**) had read the saying that all roads lead to Rome and she was asking a trick question in which the answer was hidden, '*where is Rome?*'. She did not mean the Rome which is in Italy: line 5. Also, in lines 5 and 8 she maximised her speech by giving more explanation. In this way, she gave the all students in the class who think about the question a chance to prepare their answer. When new information was provided by the speaker (**J**) in line 5 and partially repeated by the teacher in line 6, another student (**E**) remembered something and actually overlapped with them in lines 7 and 9 to answer. It is interesting here that the teacher

went from **E**'s turn in line 15 "*I don't know*" to line 16 "*you don't know*" without adding any comment. The teacher here appeared to just keep the turn going by repeating the same utterance. Although she dominated the sequence and turn taking, students also showed that they could do what looks like teacher talk. A good example of this is in lines 14 and 17 when **E** provided the answer: '*in every continent there is a Rome*' and **J** nodded her head and said '*yes, that's correct*'. Also, in lines 19 and 20 they exchanged roles, imitating teacher talk when **E** repaired **J**'s mistake. Therefore, in this extract the students were adapting their utterances and correcting each other by following very closely what their peers were saying and also what the teacher was doing.

Another interesting thing in this discussion is that the rest of students who were listening were also following and monitoring very closely what was going on as shown in picture 5.1 below:



Picture 5.1 (20.17)

This image in Picture 5.1 is held at the time of the arrow in the above extract when speaker **J** was asking the question. It is clear that the students were orienting to and following her talk in various different ways. For example, **E** turned her head slightly so that she was not gazing fully at **J** who was seated behind her, while **F** turned her head sharply and gazed towards **J**. Students seated to **J**'s left, right and behind (e.g. **I, M, P, Q, R**) were gazing straight ahead with only very slight turns towards **J**. However, students in the front left row were performing different actions rather than gazing towards **J** who was sitting behind them. In other words, as speaker **J** talked, **A** flipped the textbook over looking for information; **B** appeared to write notes down. **C** and **D** raised their right hands to their mouths as if they were thinking about the question, while respectively looking at the textbook and at the teacher.

Furthermore, it is also interesting here that desk talk was going on behind the scenes. It can be seen that **T** and **U** were talking together in the background; and in the middle left row **G** and **H** were doing the same thing. It appears that they were speaking about the ongoing discussion because the boys in the background appeared to be looking at the textbook when they were talking together. In fact, such type of talk beyond teacher-students talk was not captured in the visual recording, but is provided in the audio recording as shown in the following chapter.

The above position shows that all of the students were using different ways to participate in ongoing talk. They appeared to compete for their teacher's attention. While speaker **J** continued, student **E**'s production of 'yes' in effect



rendered the completion of J's turn in line 9, appearing to say that she had already understood. This is similar to what is known as 'recognitional onset' (Schegloff, 1987; Jefferson, 1986). Furthermore, it is clear from picture 5.1 that all of the students were non-orally involved in this discussion with no gaps, pauses or even overlaps. They were very active and following what was going on. For more explanation of this phenomenon, different examples are provided below.

In extract 5.2 below, the class was going over the practice from the lesson on listening comprehension, in which students were asked first to listen to recorded material to pick up key words and then to describe themselves using these words in the correct way. Then, each group was asked to describe somebody else using the same words, while the other groups should be able to name that person depending on the description given as follows:

### **Extract 5.2 (Listening comprehension)**

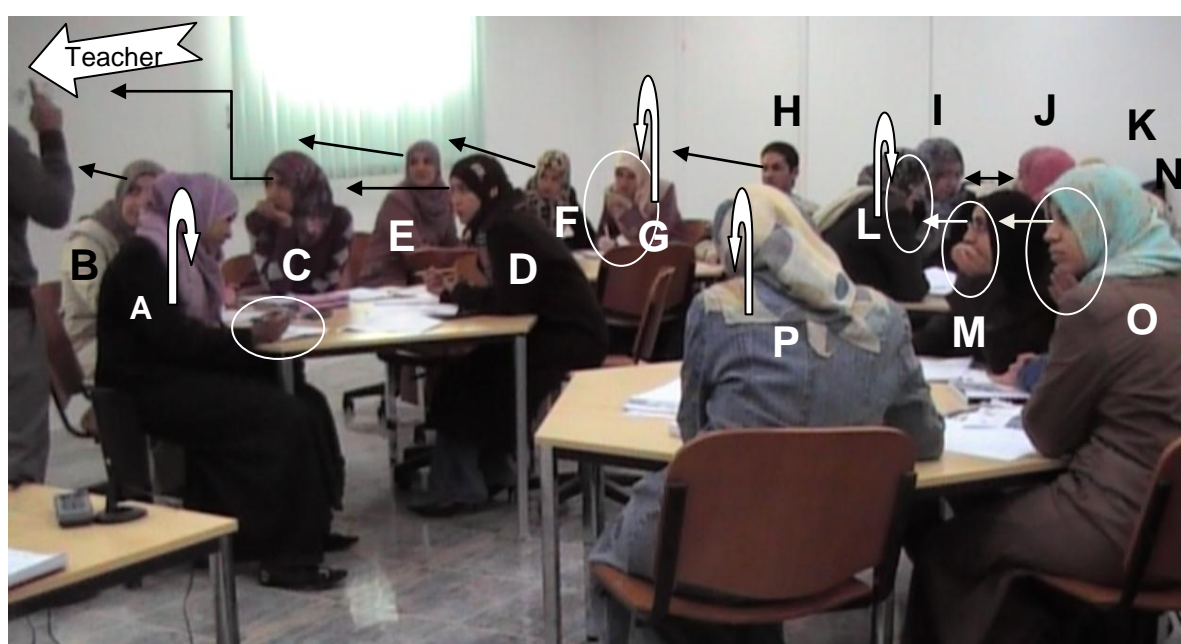
- |    |            |   |
|----|------------|---|
| 1  | Teacher:   | okay we're going to play↑ a little game ok::ay (0.1)            |
| 2  |            | so what I want you to do okay (.) from each group okay (0.1)    |
| 3  |            | is t::o <u>describe</u> or choose a person↑ (.)                 |
| 4  | Student:   | eh  |
| 5  | Teacher: → | and describe that person oka::y (.) and then (.) <u>give</u> me |
| 6  |            | what kind of shape that person is or that person has em         |
| 7  |            | or could be oka::y↑ (.) and of course that person is something  |
| 8  |            | that (.) we are a:ll familiar or we all know↑ okay              |
| 9  |            | do you understand↑ (.)  |
| 10 | Student:   | eh  |
| 11 | Teacher:   | okay the instruction i::s↑ each group each table okay(.)        |
| 12 |            | I want you t::o (.) choose one person [that is okay]            |
| 13 | Student:   | [only one]  |

14 Student: [eh]  
 15 Teacher: just one person who is [familiar to you]  
 16 Student: [\*\*\*\*]  
 17 Teacher: no just one person okay (.)  
 18 Student: \*\*\*  
 19 Teacher: a::nd describe that person ↑ (.) and em what to eh give  
 20 that person (.) a:: description or the shape ↑ that you think  
 21 that person ↓ (.) eh [has]  
 22 Student: [so others describe em]  
 23 Teacher: and then ↑ what you're going to do ↑ okay (.)  
 24 is that you're going to guess okay ↓ eh from each table  
 25 for example group one will choose one person ↑ (.)  
 27 choose a choose a person that is something that we know  
 28 also okay could b::e a tea::cher it could b::e a frie::nd  
 29 it could b::e=  
 30 Student: = anyone from eh not from the sa:: not from our group=  
 31 Teacher: =from no no from not your group okay ↓ because It's too easy  
 32 if it's from your group=  
 33 Students: =yes  
 34 Teacher: okay ↓ but someone has to b::e e::h that we're eh  
 35 that we all know okay ↓ (.)  
 36 Student: that everybody knows ↑  
 37 Teacher: everybody knows hhh okay  
 38 Students: hhh

The interpretation of the teacher's utterances in this extract '5.2' clearly reflects the importance of embodied actions produced by students. As can be noticed, in lines 1-3 the teacher introduced a new activity to students providing them with instructions to be followed. Then, in lines 5-9, 11-12, 19-21 and 23-29 he repeated the instructions for the activity several times even though nobody had asked him to do so. Each time he repeated the same instructions but with more detail, trying to simplify this activity for the students. The reason for this repetition was that he recognised from the students' body

movements such as gazes and glances around that many of the students did not actually understand his meaning. The production of extended words, raised intonation, and slight pauses from time to time in utterances is very good evidence of the teacher's awareness that some students were not following. Also, the comments provided by students asking questions and confirming information after the teacher's repetition in lines 22 "[so others describe em]", 30 "anyone from eh not from the sa:: not from our group" and 36 "that everybody knows ↑", is further evidence of their difficulty in understanding. Moreover, while the teacher was explaining the instructions for this activity, no students said anything; but the teacher knew from their embodied actions that his speech needed to be repeated because it might not have been making sense to some of the students.

A careful investigation of the digitized version of the original video recording reveals that the students were quite clearly orienting to their teacher's talk as shown in the distribution of different actions (see picture 5.2).



**Picture 5.2 (50.33)**

This image was taken while the teacher was providing the instructions for the new activity. It is clear that all students were orienting to and following his talk in various ways. For example, **B**, **C**, **E** and **F** turned their heads sharply with body twisting and gazed towards the teacher who stood to their right hand side. Students seated to the teacher's right and in front (e.g. **D**, **H**, **M**, **N** and **O**) were gazing straight ahead with only very slight turns towards the teacher. However, some students were performing different actions rather than gazing towards their teacher. While students **A**, **G**, **L** and **P** appeared to write notes down while listening to and looking at the teacher respectively; students **I**, **J**, and **K** in the background behind the scenes were talking to each other, directing glances towards the teacher from time to time. What is interesting is that, as the teacher talked, **C**, **G**, **M**, and **O** raised their hands to their mouths in order to think about the teacher's words while gazing towards him.

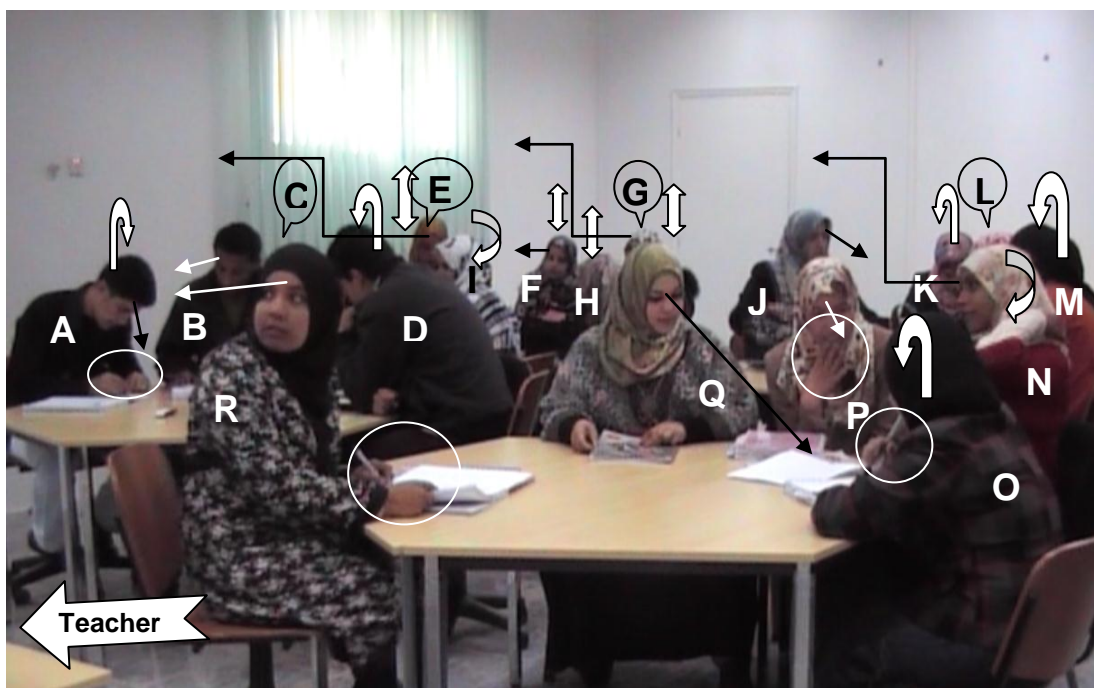
By examining the extract and the image (5.2) again, however, two things clearly appear. Firstly, some students were fully following their teacher, saying 'eh and yes' in lines 4, 10, 14 and 33 while they were gazing towards him in order to express their understanding. Secondly, the teacher's pauses, intonation and extended words were employed in order to solicit the gaze of non-gazing students. Here the teacher is, thus, waiting for their gazes to arrive. In fact, this is similar to what is explained by Goodwin (1981, pp. 66-67) when he confirms that "a pause is used ... until the gaze of a recipient has been obtained". From this, it might be noted that the embodiments employed by students are very meaningful to the teacher and that they are very important in monitoring their understanding.

Another example of participation embodiments for participating in classroom discussion comes from the lesson on speaking skills where students were required to practise their speaking ability, as shown in the following extract:

### Extract 5.3 (Speaking skills)

- 1 Teacher: now I want you to close your books and (.) look at the board
- 2 here (.) what you find (0.9) what's this
- 3 Students: [[hairdryer]]
- 4 Teacher: hai::r dryer (.) okay hai::r
- 5 Stdents: [[hairdryer]]
- 6 Teacher: → a::nd and am gonna write some words here (.) some words
- 7 like (.) water ↑ (0.4) hot (0.2) air↑ (.) oka::y
- 8 Students: [[ok]]
- 9 Teacher: so (.) hairdryer is what ↑ is a compound noun isn't it
- 10 Students: [[ye::s]]
- 11 Teacher: okay (.) is a compound noun ↓ so (0.1) this we call it as
- 12 a compound noun and here we have key words ↑ (.) ke::y
- 13 Students: [[words]]
- 14 Teacher: wor::ds (.) water (.) hot (.) and air (.) what I want you to do is ↑
- 15 t:o defi:::ne (0.1) [hairdryer
- 16 Students: without these words]
- 17 Teacher: [without ↑ (.)
- 18 Students: using]
- 19 Teacher: using any of the keywords (.) o:f (.) the compou::nd noun ↓
- 20 okay=
- 21 Students: =ok ↓
- 22 Teacher: define it (.) each group (.) try to figure out a definition (.)
- 23 for a hairdryer ↑ without using any of the keywords here
- 24 or (0.3) their compound noun ↓
- 25 Students: hair or dryer
- 26 Teacher: no hair no drier no water no hand no catch
- 27 Students: laughter
- 28 Teacher: okay ↑ so try (.) try to write it down and we'll see which ↑
- 29 definition is e::h going to be the most acceptable one (.)

In extract 5.3, the teacher initiated the progression to the new task when she asked students to close their books and pay attention by looking at what she was writing on the board, in line 1. In order to help the students keep up, the teacher ended all her turns with explicit questions or prompting words, as shown in lines 2 “*what’s this*”, 4 “*okay hai::r*”, 7 “*oka::y*”, 9 “*isn’t it*”, 12 “*ke::y*” and 20 “*okay*”. All these prompting words and questions were addressed to the whole class and the opportunity was therefore open for anybody to answer or participate. In this case, the answers to these questions came from the whole class at the same times in lines 3, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 21. Even though the students verbally displayed their willingness to participate by answering the teacher’s questions together, some students were integrating their speech with non-verbal movements, while others depended solely on these movements and did not speak at all. In other words, students sometimes prefer to use embodiments even when the opportunity to speak is open to the whole class for participation, as can be seen in the following digitized frame version:



**Picture 5.3 (10.31)**

From the above digitized picture caught at the arrow in the above extract '5.3' while the teacher was writing on the board and prompting students to repeat her words and answer her questions, it is clear that all of the students were performing different actions. For example, **A**, **D**, **M**, and **K** appeared to write notes while looking at the board and then their notebooks. Students who were not directly seated opposite the board (e.g. **H**, **I**, **L**, **N** and **R**) twisted their bodies and turned their heads sharply or slightly according to their position in order to be able to gaze towards the board and the teacher; while others (e.g., **B**, **E**, **F**, and **G**) were gazing straight ahead towards the board. However, students **P** and **Q** at the front table and **J** who was sitting behind them seemed to be unable to understand because they were directing their gazes towards their colleagues' notebooks. They were looking for relevant information. The way in which hands were raised to the mouth while gazing towards the notebook for thinking about something (see student **P**), also gives

an indication of difficulty in understanding and information-seeking. Most of the students who gazed towards the board and the teacher (**E, F, G, H** and **B**) were nodding their heads in order to show their agreement and that they were following what was going on.

In the situation described above, some of the students who gazed towards the teacher or towards the board, with or without nodding their heads, were answering the teacher's questions (e.g., in lines 3 and 10), repeating her words (lines 8 and 21), or completing her utterances (lines 5 and 13); while others were participating non-verbally by nodding their heads instead of repeating and completing the teacher's words. Furthermore, some students were taking notes and looking for information as the classroom discussion was going on. In these ways, all of the students were participating in the discussion either by using their explicit embodiments or by accompanying these embodiments with verbal utterances.

The next example of participation embodiments in EFL context occurred in a linguistics lesson (see extract 5.4). This situation was part of a review led by the teacher to help students cope with what they had learnt so far. The teacher distributed known answer questions to the students who were required to be involved in the process of practicing. This type of questions is always referred to as display questions (see, e.g., Seedhouse, 2004), in which participants produce answers for the teacher who evaluates or provides feedback as in IRE/IRF format explained above in chapter two. Display questions are characterised by either specifying what the answer is or by



specifying the main recipient of the answer who is always the teacher (see, e.g., Seedhouse, 2004, Hall, 1997). Since the teacher controls the task, which is often related to written material such as a textbook, the opportunities for verbal classroom participation might be constrained in these ongoing activities. Students in such cases may resort to non-verbal movements, 'embodiments', in order to be participated. Extract 5.4 below gives an example of such activities where the teacher provides the selected student with a question. This example comes from the linguistics lesson in which the teacher was leading students to review the previous lessons. Since the teacher led this task which is of a type often related to written material such as textbook, verbal opportunities for classroom participation might be not available to all students. In such cases, they may resort to embodiments to participate in the ongoing talk as shown in extract 5.4 below:

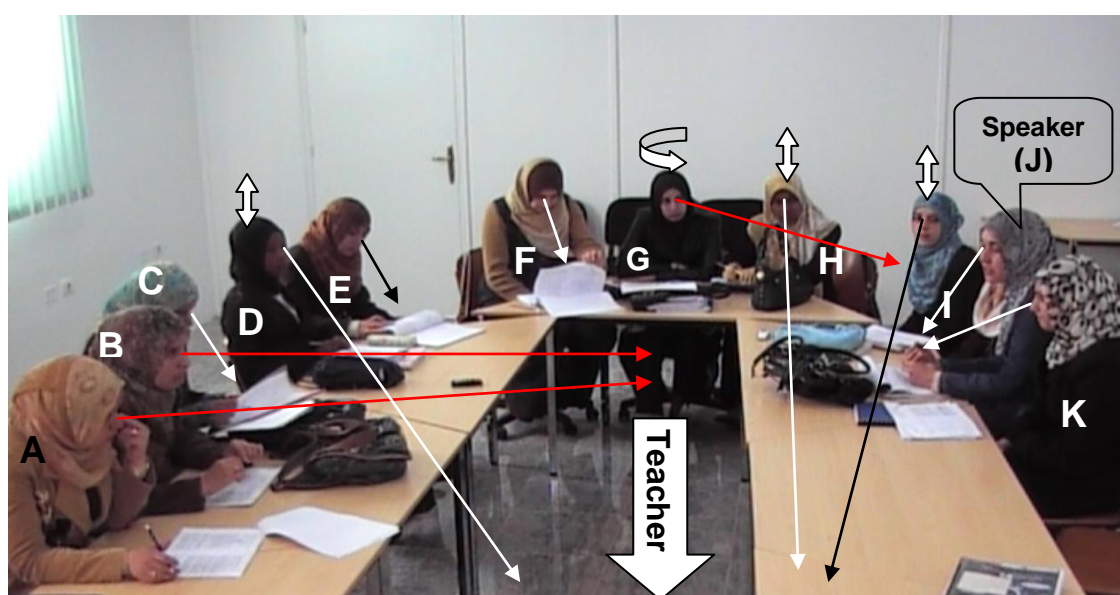
#### **Extract 5.4 (Linguistics)**

- |    |           |   |
|----|-----------|---|
| 1  | Teacher:  | ((name of the student)) what does the behaviourists say         |
| 2  |           | exactly about language acquisition=                             |
| 3  | Student:  | =[the behaviour]  |
| 4  | Teacher:  | [the behaviourists yes]   |
| 5  | Student:  | ye::s (.) they said that language acquisition is a matter of    |
| 6  |           | imitations and habit information                                |
| 7  | Teacher:  | ye::h   |
| 8  | Student:  | that he is trying to imitate from the environment around him=   |
| 9  | Students: | =[yes]  |
| 10 | Teacher:  | [e::h]  |
| 11 | Student:  | and they also said ↑ that th::e (0.2) that his eh his imitation |
| 12 |           | is not randomly ↑ (.)   |
| 13 | Teacher:  | oka::y  |
| 14 | Student:  | it is selective.  |
| 15 | Teacher:  | e::h  |

- 16 Student: it's built on his previous knowledge ↑ (.)
- 17 Teacher: yeah
- 18 Student: for example he does not (.) imitate any word for eh
- 19 he imitates the ↑ (.) the word which new to him ↑
- 20 Teacher: ye::s ↓
- 21 Students: [[yes]]
- 22 Teacher: so you mean the eh the imitation is very selective ↑ right=
- 23 Student: =yes it's very selective
- 24 Teacher: they select what they want to imitate until it becomes habit ↓
- 25 Students: [[ye::s]]

In line 1 of the above extract (5.4) the teacher started by nominating a student to answer before he provided the question. The student selected to answer the question, repeated what the teacher had asked about perhaps because she was not sure about some words in the question, or to delay the answer until she was ready, in line 3. The teacher in line 4 overlapped the student to confirm the question. The selected student used the word “ye::s” in line 5 to open her talk and then provided the answer in several turns. Since the teacher nominated this speaker, he had the leading role in the ongoing conversation. In lines 7, 10, 13, 15, 17 and 20, the teacher's turns were prosodic markers with sound stretches (e.g., ye::h, oka::y and e::h) used to extend utterances and elicit knowledge from the student that was already known by the teacher (see, e.g., Koshik, 2002, p. 288). By using such markers, the teacher invited the speaker to extend her answer and also prompted all of the students to follow. Then, he marked the answer as acceptable in line 20 and concluded with a summary of the student's answer in lines 22 and 24.

Despite the fact that all students were following the student's talk and the completion of the teacher's utterances, their verbal turns were only 'yes' sent as a choral reply in lines 9, 21, and 25. In this way, the other students in such display questions were constrained to participate orally when the speaker was specifying the teacher as the main recipient of the answer (see, e.g., Seedhouse, 2004, Hall, 1997). However, all of the students were participated in the classroom discussion, employing different embodiments be involved. For instance, the selected student, **J**, gazed towards her textbook on the desk in front of her and turned her head towards the teacher from time to time while she was answering the question. At the same time, the other students were participated in through different movements such as nodding their heads to display that they were following and raising their heads towards the teacher to show that they knew the answer. They were also looking at their textbooks, at the speaker and at the teacher. In this way, the rest of the students who produced non-verbal actions were participating as well. They were following and monitoring very closely what was going on as shown in picture 5.4.



**Picture 5.4 (01.46)**

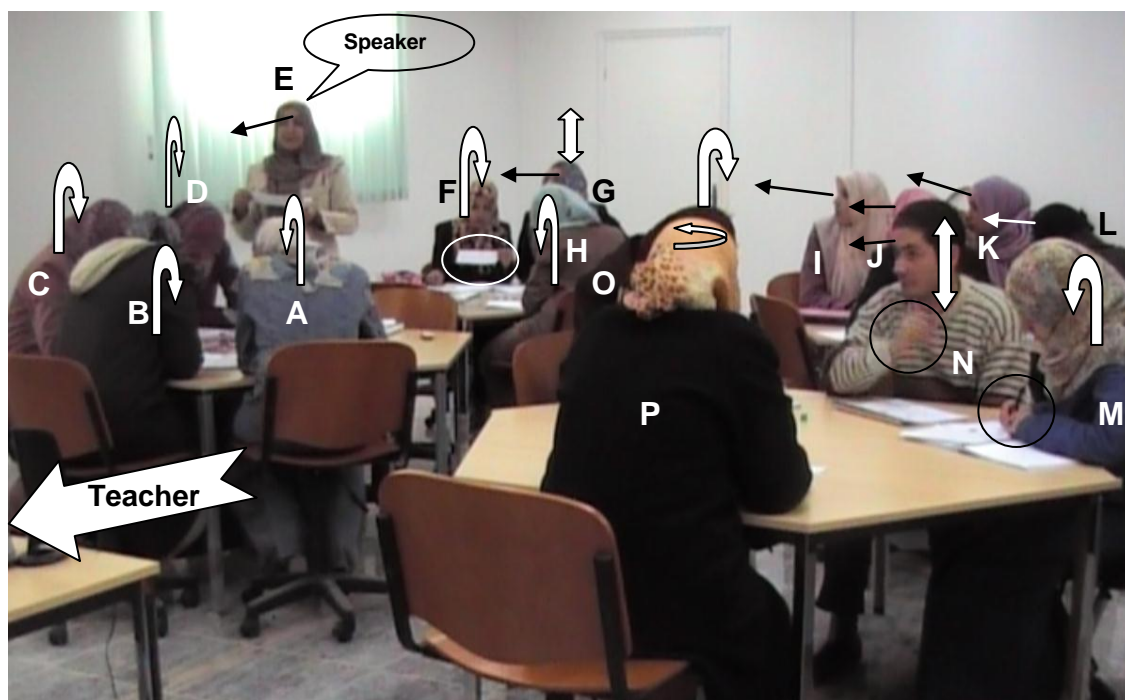
This position occurred while speaker **J** was talking and responding to the teacher's question. It is clear that all of the students were orienting to and following her talk in different ways. For example, **G** turned her head slightly so that she was gazing more fully at **J** who was seated to her left, while **A** and **B** who were seated directly opposite **J** were gazing straight ahead towards her. However, the rest of students were performing different actions rather than gazing towards the speaker (**J**). In other words, as speaker **J** talked, **D**, **H**, and **I** were gazing towards the teacher who was standing in front of the class, and they nodded their heads as if confirming the speaker's words. Students **C**, **E** and **F** were gazing fully towards their textbooks on the desk in front of them and flipping the pages over because they were seeking the answer. As mentioned above, the speaker **J** gazed towards her textbook on the desk in front of her while she was responding to the teacher's question. Following the speaker's words, student **K** appeared to gaze towards **J**'s textbook because she wanted to ascertain the answer by looking at both the speaker and her textbook.

Extract 5.5 is taken from a lesson on listening comprehension, and gives another example of the use of different embodied actions as turn-taking is in progress. In this example, students were asked first to listen carefully to the tape-recording of people being described. They had to take notes and pick up the important words used for description while they listened to the recording. Then, they were asked some questions about what they had listened to as follows:

### Extract 5.5 (Listening comprehension)

- 1 Teacher: okay so can I call someone from group one to give me a  
2 description ↑ (.) what does the triangle represents oka:y (0.2)  
3 s::o group one ↑ y::es one of the key words again I'm looking  
4 for the key words okay ↑ (.) go ahead  
5 Student: → triangle ↑ eh represents a person to be ambitious ↑  
6 Teacher: =correct  
7 Student: determined =  
8 Teacher: =e::h  
9 Student: and single minded=  
10 Teacher: =very good yes exactly (.)

In lines 1 and 2, the teacher provided a question about the triangle feature. Then, he nominated group one to provide the answer, repeating the instructions with more detail trying to simplify this task for the students, in lines 3 and 4. Student **E** who was selected as a speaker in group one, stood up and started to provide the answer in lines 5, 7 and 9. The teacher's turns in lines 6 and 8 were used to elicit knowledge from the speaker that was already known by the teacher because he had the leading role in the ongoing conversation (see, e.g., Koshik, 2002, p. 288). In this case, he marked the answer as acceptable, saying '*correct*' in line 6, and provided an extended prosodic mark '*e::h*' in line 8. Then, the teacher concluded by giving feedback on the student's answer in the last line, 10. Despite the fact that all of the students were following the student's talk and the teacher's turns, no verbal turns were provided by the other students to participate in the ongoing discussion. However, this does not mean that the students who produce no oral engagement were not participating. Rather, they were actually providing different movements to show their participation as in the following picture:



**Picture 5.5 (36.32)**

This image represents students' embodiments when the task was going on. It shows exactly what happened at the arrow in extract 5.5 above as the turn-taking was in progress. It is clear from this position that different actions were adopted by students to express their orientation to the ongoing talk. In general, students were not only looking at their textbooks, but they were either gazing towards speaker **E** to understand her talk or they were gazing towards the teacher who was dominating the discussion and listening to his comments and feedback. For example, the students who were sitting at the front left hand side (**A**, **B**, **C**, **D**) appeared to look at their textbooks for comparing the speaker's answer to their written notes. This action was also adopted by students in the other groups, **F**, **H**, **M**, and **O**. However, students **I**, **J**, **K**, **L**, and **P** twisted their bodies and/or turned their heads in order to gaze sharply towards the speaker **E** who was standing on their right hand side. In addition, students **G** and **N** were gazing towards the teacher, nodding their heads and

making hand gestures respectively. Following the speaker's words, student **F** also appeared as she was holding her textbook up and reading her written notes.

In extract 5.6 below, the classroom was doing a textbook activity on phonetics. The exercise was about identifying each vowel sound, pronouncing it in the correct way, and giving a description according to its position in the IPA vowel chart drawn on the board which represents the position in the oral cavity where the sounds are produced. This example provides a particularly clear demonstration of embodied action, since all students were attuned to and translating their teacher's talk according to their understanding. The extract (5.6) begins as the teacher projected the next-activity in which students would put the vowel sounds in their appropriate positions on the board.

### **Extract 5.6 (Phonetics)**

- |    |            |   |
|----|------------|---|
| 1  | Teacher:   | oka::y let's do something else okay ↓ while we are (.)                |
| 2  |            | describing the vowels ↓ can we ↑ can we put the vowels on             |
| 3  |            | the quadrilateral on the board okay=                                  |
| 4  | Students:  | =[[yes]]  |
| 5  | Teacher: → | can we put them on the board (.) yes so who can (.)                   |
| 6  |            | yes who did number one ↑ (.) who did vowel number one ↑ (.)           |
| 7  |            | can you come and put it on the board (.) on the quadrilateral (.)     |
| 8  |            | just to show us eh the position of the vowel ↑ on the (.)             |
| 9  |            | quadrilateral (0.3) okay anyone ↑=                                    |
| 10 | Students:  | =[[yes]]  |
| 11 | Teacher:   | yes please (0.8) just to make the picture of the vowel ↑ <u>clear</u> |
| 12 |            | oka::y you see (.) its position on the quadrilateral (.)              |

In lines 1 to 3, the teacher provided his question for the students to start the new activity. Some students showed their understanding of the activity directly by raising their hands and calling *[[yes]]*, in line 4, while others were still thinking about the new activity as seen in the provided image below, 5.6. It shows that the students were participating in different ways. They behaved so as to compete for their teacher's attention. While the teacher continued, students **B**, **K** and **L** produced 'yes', in effect rendering the completion of the teacher's turn in line 3, appearing to signal that they already understood. This is also similar to what is known as 'recognitional onset' (Schegloff, 1987; Jefferson, 1986). However, the teacher was able to realise from surrounding movements that other students were still thinking about his question, because they were gazing towards him or their textbooks. They used different movements without saying anything. Therefore, the teacher delayed the actual selection of who was to answer by repeating his question about six or seven times in lines 5 to 9 while he scanned the classroom.

The features of this extract (5.6) clearly reflect the importance of the participation embodiments adopted by students in this situation. Their movements guided the conversation in specific ways as shown above in extract 5.6. That the teacher repeated the question several times even though nobody had asked him to do so is good evidence of the importance of these embodiments. In fact, the teacher recognised from the gazes and glances around him that most of the class did not understand his question. Also, repeating the instructions for this activity once again by the teacher in lines 11 and 12 and using a pause after selecting the respondent, 'yes please (0.8)', is



another evidence of difficulty in understanding. Although the students had not said anything; the teacher knew from their gazes that his words did not make sense to them and for this reason he provided the repetition of the instructions, (picture 5.6).

**Picture 5.6 (03.06)**

However, student **A** in the front row turned her body slightly so that she was gazing more fully at the teacher who stood to her right. While she was gazing sharply towards the teacher, she put her hands together because she was trying to make sense of the teacher's words. Student **C** in the front middle row was performing a different action rather than gazing towards the teacher who was standing in front of her desk. As the teacher talked, **C** flipped the pages of the textbook looking for the answer. She also appeared to have a pencil in her right hand for writing notes and raised her left hand to her mouth for thinking about the answer while looking carefully at the textbook. The other student in the front middle row, **D**, reacted similarly to the teacher's question with slightly different movements. She was gazing straight ahead towards her textbook while also directing glances at the teacher. Students **F**, **H** and **M** who were seated to the teacher's left and right in the back row performed almost the same action of gazing towards the teacher and then their textbooks. Conversely, students **E**, **G**, and **I** were not doing anything else except to gaze sharply towards the teacher, clearly seeking more explanation so that they could understand the new activity.

Although some students were raising their hands so as to be orally participated in the activity, others were either looking at their textbooks to understand the activity or were gazing towards the teacher waiting for repetition or more explanation. In this case, most of the students seemed to be unable to cope with the new activity, and looked at the teacher with quizzical gazes waiting for his clarification. This explains why the question was repeated about six or seven times by the teacher in extract 5.6 above.

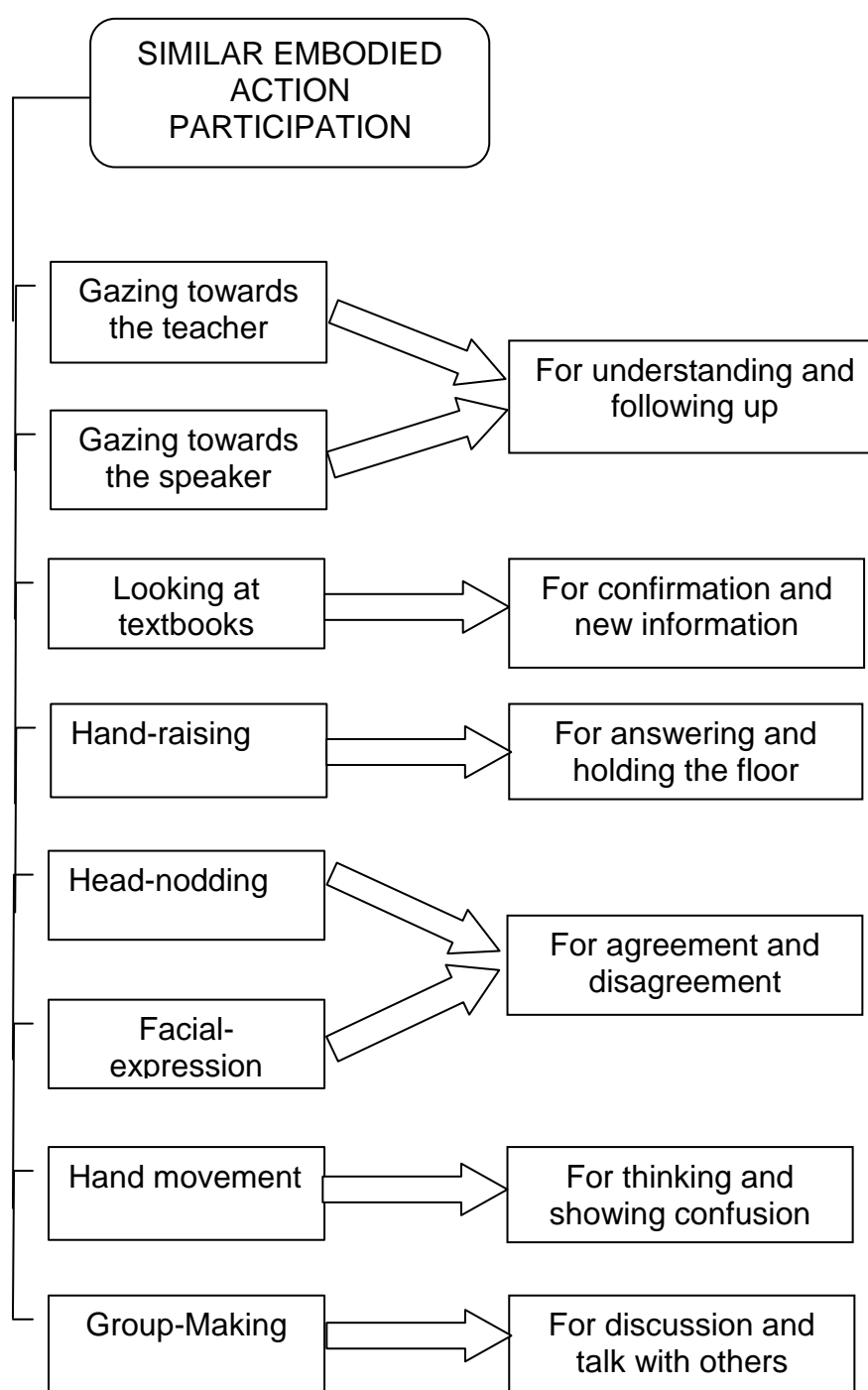
## **6. 2. Similar embodied action for classroom participation**

From the above analysis, it becomes apparent that participation in the classroom is not restricted only to oral engagement but it also includes non-oral movements. It also seems from the analysis of the data that students do not only employ different embodiments in order to participate in group in different ways. Rather, they may also all use the same action at the same time when turn-taking is in progress in order to participate in the plenary interaction. In this way, all of the students may participate in their classes as one group. This happens when all of the students are in total agreement that a particular embodied action is appropriate of that point in the turn-taking. Instead of participating via oral utterances, they create relevant movements to show their following and participation in the ongoing talk. Therefore, more examples are provided below of each type of embodied action used by all students at the same time as a mode of classroom participation. These examples are illustrated with short extracts and digitized pictures which are representative of a larger set of data.

Therefore, the analysis of extracts from the data collected in this section provide a general background about these movements used by students during the same turn and at the same time. Understanding the way in which embodied action is exploited by all students at once as a current speaker talks requires careful specification of the movements made, as shown in the video-recordings accompanied by precise description of the utterances made in the ongoing classroom conversation as it occurs in interaction in order to make the relevant details accessible for analysis.

The analysis of data in this chapter shows that similar movements are provided by all of the students as one action. They utilize such type of participation to cope with the surrounding talk. Figure 5.1 below shows these similar embodied actions and the purpose they are used for:

**Figure 5.3: Similar embodied action as used for classroom participation**



### 6. 2. 1. Gazing towards the teacher

Among the embodied actions used, gaze patterns are deployed by participants for several purposes. For instance, as described above (section 3), gazing towards the speaker is used to show or elicit reciprocity (Heath 1984). Other studies have also indicated that gaze patterns play a very important role in the negotiation of participation frameworks (see, e.g., Goodwin, 2002; Kendon, 1990a). Such research reveals how gaze is deployed to indicate the degree of engagement or disengagement in ongoing talk. As Goodwin (2002) argues, “participants can mark alternative states of engagement and disengagement ... through phenomena such as gaze toward or away from their co-participants” (p. 38).

Extract 5.7 below is taken from the lesson on speaking skills. Participants were instructed to prepare a question for classroom discussion based either on what they had read in their textbooks or on their previous knowledge. They were divided into groups and each group was told to ask their question, leading into an open discussion after which they gave the right answer. By asking them to create their own questions, their teacher here aimed to regulate the class discussion in order to ensure that most students became involved in classroom interaction so that they would participate more deeply with what was going on:

#### Extract 5.7 (Reading comprehension)

- 1 Teacher: → ask something↑(.) e:h (0.2)
- 2 not something common↓
- 3 that everybody knows
- 4 =I want you to provide a question (.)
- 5 that(.) not everybody knows

In extract 5.7, the teacher at this point gave information about what kinds of questions should be provided for discussion. It seems that while the teacher was walking among the students, she noted that they were preparing questions which were easy to answer. Therefore, at the arrow she began to repeat to the students the instructions about the activity but in more detail. She asked several times that they should avoid questions that 'everybody knows'. What is interesting here is that while the teacher's turn-taking was in progress, students turned their heads sharply towards the teacher and gazed at her from all directions while she circulated around the classroom illustrating the required activity with a hand gesture as shown in picture 5.7.



**Picture 5.7 (12.45)**

This gazing by all of the students toward the teacher can be understood as a mode of group participation in the classroom interaction by paying attention and following what was going on. In this case, they were orienting to the speaker's utterances without themselves uttering responsive words such as

‘yes’ or ‘what’ (Schegloff, 1968). Students here were displaying their reciprocity and participation in the current activity by gazing towards the teacher and by showing that they are listening and are ‘doing being recipient’ (Sahlström, 1999, pp. 86-7).

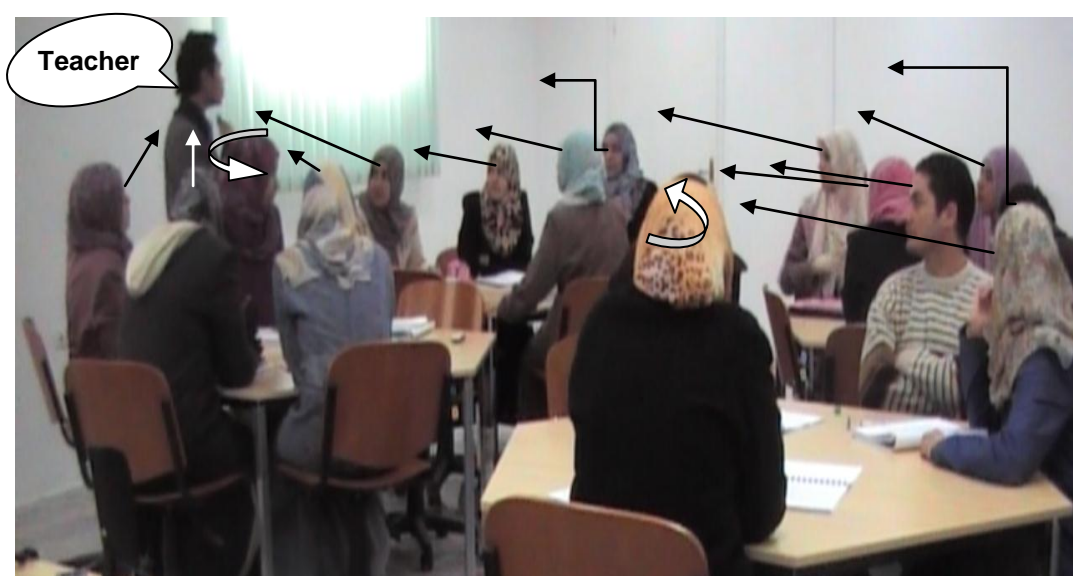
Extract 5.8 below is taken from a lesson on listening comprehension, and gives another example of gazing towards the teacher during their turn-taking. In this example, students had been asked first to listen carefully to the tape-recording about describing people. They had to take notes and select important words used for description while they listened to the recording. Each student was then given a minute to describe her/himself to their group. Then, one student from each group was selected to describe the students in their group.

#### **Extract 5.8 (Listening comprehension)**

- |   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| 1 | Teacher:  | yes so (.) eh so what eh how much you want to do thi::s (.)            |
| 2 |           | you are in (0.2) in each table ↑ (.) oka::y em give yourself           |
| 3 |           | about eh one <u>mi::nute</u> oka::y (.) to talk about yourself I think |
| 4 |           | I a::m ok ↓ and then later on ↑ I want each (.) em ask                 |
| 5 | →         | one person from each table to stand up ↑ (.) a::nd sh::are             |
| 6 |           | what was discussed among each group ↓ oka::y=                          |
| 7 | Students: | [[okay]]   |

In this example, students were orienting to the teacher’s instructions in lines 1-6 for describing themselves to their groups. While the teacher was providing students with a strategy for completing this activity, students started to move their gazes in the teacher’s direction. These gaze reorientations continued so that at the point of the arrow in line 5 all students were gazing towards the

teacher as shown in picture 5.8 below. The students seemed to be following the teacher's utterances in order to understand his request. The students' immediately following turn "[[okay]]" in line 7 is then evidence of their understanding. During and after the time at which they produced this 'okay' the students started to withdraw their gazes from the teacher and towards their textbooks to continue the activity. Picture 5.8 clarifies students' gaze reorientations towards the teacher.



**Picture 5.8 (00. 25)**

Picture 5.8 was captured as the teacher explained to students the method of doing the next activity. It shows that all students were gazing towards the teacher. In this way, they were fully participating in and orienting to what was going on.

Another example of the group gazing towards the teacher to participate in classroom discussion comes from the lesson on speaking skills where



students were required to practise their speaking ability. The teacher was asking students to establish the new activity as shown in the following extract (5.9):

#### **Extract 5.9 (Speaking skills)**

- 1 Teacher: → a::nd and am gonna write some words here (.) some words  
2 like (.) water ↑ (0.4) hot (0.2) air↑ (.) oka::y  
3 Students: [[ok]]  
4 Teacher: so (.) hairdryer is what ↑ is a compound noun isn't it  
5 Students: [[ye::s]]  
6 Teacher: okay (.) is a compound noun ↓ so (0.1) this we call it as  
7 a compound noun and here we have key words ↑ (.) ke::y=  
8 Students: =[[words]]

As extract 5.9 shows, the teacher was writing on the board some words that could be used to define the compound word “hairdryer”. While she was writing on the board, she was trying to make students follow and pay attention to her explanation. For this reason, her utterances in lines 1 and 2 included extended words, raised intonation, and small pauses from time to time. Also, the teacher ended all her turns (lines 2, 4, 7) with prompting words or questions in order to make sure that students were following her talk. These prompting words and questions were addressed to the whole class and the opportunity was therefore open for anybody to answer or complete the teacher’s turns. In this case, most of students provided oral participation by repeating the teacher’s word in line 3 “[ok]”, answering her question in line 4 “[ye::s]”, and completing her turn in line 7 “[words]”.

Even though some students displayed verbal engagement by answering the teacher's questions, others depended solely on gazing towards the teacher to participate in class talk without saying anything. This confirms that students might sometimes prefer to participate in class discussion by using embodied actions even when the opportunity to talk is open to the whole class. What is interesting in this situation is that all students agreed to produce the same action of gazing towards the teacher in order to follow their teacher's explanation as a mode of engagement in the ongoing activity, as shown in the following digitized frame image, 5.9.



**Picture 5.9 (10.01)**

By examining the extract and the image in picture 5.9 again as the teacher explained the instructions for this activity, two things clearly appear. Firstly, some students were verbally following their teacher by providing answers and repeating words while they gazed towards her in order to express their understanding. Secondly, some others did not say anything but they were also gazing towards the teacher. In this way, all students were participated in

ongoing talk by gazing towards the teacher; but not all of them produced verbal engagements. They knew that in such an open opportunity to answer the teacher was waiting for their gazes to arrive which may reflect their answer instead of using verbal participation. Therefore, it might be noted that the embodiments employed by students were necessary to reflect their participation. Yet a careful investigation of the digitized version of the original video recording reveals that students quite clearly oriented to their teacher's talk and adopted a similar action of gazing towards the teacher.

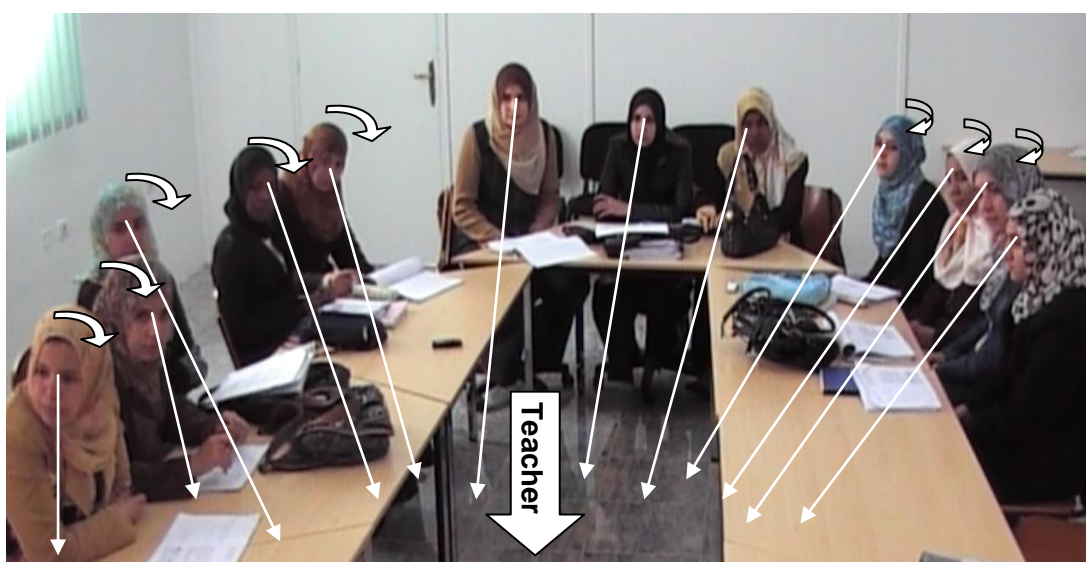
The next example of similar participation embodiments in which all students are gazing at the same time towards the teacher comes from the linguistics lesson as seen in extract 5.10. In this situation, the teacher was reviewing the previous lessons with students. He was asking known answer questions to the students who were required to participate in ongoing discussion.

#### **Extract 5.10 (Linguistics)**

- |   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| 1 | Teacher:  | → yeah. first of all↓ (.) <u>what</u> (.) do other (.) linguists (.) |
| 2 |           | ca:ll his <u>theory</u> (.) Chomsky's theory ↓                       |
| 3 | Students: | [[the imitative]]  |
| 4 | Teacher:  | the imi::tative ↑ right so it was kind of a respo:::nse ↑ to (.) the |
| 5 |           | behaviourist theory right  |
| 6 | Students: | [[right]] [[yes]]  |

It is clear from the above extract (5.10) that the ongoing discussion was about Chomsky's theory which was mentioned by students to answer one of the teacher's previous questions. The teacher immediately held the floor by saying "yeah" in line 1. Then, he continued his talk by asking a related

question. In this situation, the teacher's turns were also accompanied by prosodic markers such as extended words, small pauses and emphasised words in lines 1 and 2. By using such markers, he provided an opportunity for students to establish their engagements. He was in this way eliciting information from the students that was already known by the teacher (see, e.g., Koshik, 2002, p. 288). By answering in group [[the imitative]] in line 3, the students showed that they were following their teacher's words. Then, the teacher marked their verbal answer as acceptable by repeating the answer and adding more information in lines 4 and 5. The students established in line 6 verbal utterances again in group to show their oral participation. Some students repeated the teacher's word "[[right]]"; and others provided the word "[[yes]]" as their oral engagement. However, all of the students were non-verbally engaged in the ongoing discussion by gazing towards the teacher as shown in picture 5.10.



**Picture 5.10 (13.37)**

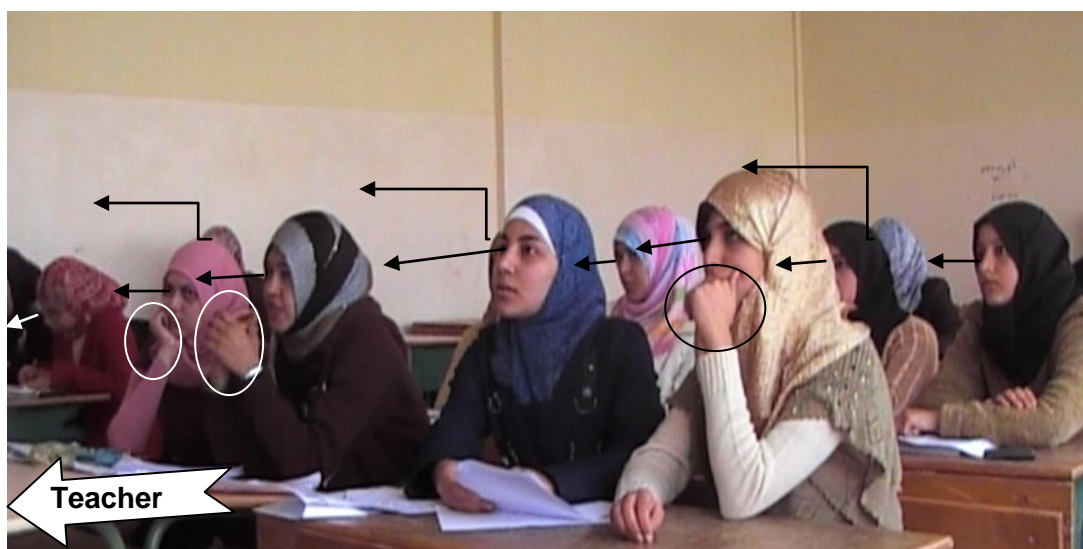
Although most of the students were following the teacher's talk by providing their verbal turns, others still preferred to say nothing but participating through embodied action. At the same time, this situation provided no evidence that all of the students participated orally. However, it is clear from the picture above that all of the students participated by directing their gazes fully towards the teacher. They tried to display that they were following by gazing and raising their heads towards the teacher and they knew the answer. In this way, even the students who produced only non-verbal actions were participating too. They were following and monitoring very closely what was going on.

The final example of gazing towards the teacher is from the class doing the exercise on the phonetic symbols of vowel sounds. The activity was about producing words which included specific vowel sounds, pronouncing them correctly, and then writing their transcriptions on the board as seen in extract 5.11 below.

#### **Extract 5.11 (Phonetics)**

- |    |            |  |
|----|------------|--|
| 1  | Teacher:   | <u>yes</u> pull okay ↓ can you come out to write the phonetic        |
| 2  |            | transcription on the board ↑   |
| 3  | Student:   | yes  |
| 4  | Teacher:   | okay come and write it there (0.5) to show (.) the eh the word       |
| 5  |            | here in its sound look (.) okay ↓ (2.0) pull ye::s (.) pull =        |
| 6  | Students:  | = yes  |
| 7  | Teacher: → | but we should <u>u::se</u> in phonetic symbols ↓ we should u:::se ↑= |
| 8  | Students:  | = [[small]]  |
| 9  | Teacher:   | sma::ll ↑ (.)  |
| 10 | Students:  | [[letters]]  |
| 11 | Teacher:   | small letters not capital letters okay s::o yes.                     |

In line 1, the teacher marked the student's answer as acceptable by producing the emphasised 'yes' and repeating the word "pull". Then, he invited the student to write the phonetic transcription of this word on the board in lines 1 and 2. While the word was being written on the board and after a long pause in line 5, the teacher started to read the transcription written on the board. The teacher provided in line 5 the extended "ye::s" followed by a small pause when he was reading the transcription of the word. The extended yes and the pause in this case represented an open invitation to students to participate in, "pull ye::s (.) pull". It seems that the teacher was giving students the opportunity to assess the answer. Most of the students provided their verbal agreement, "yes" in line 6. However, the students immediately discovered that their assessment was wrong because the teacher then said in line 7 "but we should u::se in phonetic symbols ↓ we should u:::se ↑="". He started his turn with the word 'but' which meant that the true answer was contrary to the students' assessment. Also, repeating the word 'use' with an emphasis, extension and rising intonation indicated the mistaken answer, and also invited students to provide the correct answer. In this case, all students gazed fully towards the teacher in order to follow the ongoing interaction as shown in picture 5.11 below:



**Picture 5.11 (18.41)**

It is clear from the above picture that all students were gazing towards the teacher in some surprise. They tried to follow this up by gazing and raising their heads towards the teacher. They wanted to discover the mistake in the transcription provided. In this way, the whole class was in agreement on the appropriate non-verbal action needed for this turn-taking. They were again following and monitoring very closely this surrounding social environment.

### **6. 2. 2. Gazing towards other speaker**

Gaze patterns are also used at the same time by most or all of the students in class as a similar action to follow and pay attention to any speaker other than the teacher. Similar to the way of gazing towards the teacher, students gaze fully towards the speaker in order to show or elicit reciprocity. This reveals how gaze is deployed to indicate the degree of participation in class talk, since gaze plays a very important role in the negotiation of participation frameworks (see, e.g., Goodwin, 2002; Kendon, 1990a).

Extract 5.12, for example, is taken from the lesson on speaking skills where students were asked to prepare a question for classroom discussion. In this activity, students were divided into groups and each group asked a question which led to an open discussion before they gave the right answer. By having them create their own questions, their teacher tried to regulate class discussion to ensure that all students were participated more deeply with what was going on.

### **Extract 5.12 (Reading comprehension)**

- |    |            |   |
|----|------------|---|
| 1  | Student: → | eh: I think of: something but I don't             |
| 2  |            | know eh exactly the word which we use             |
| 3  |            | for example↑ eh i::n in Eid Aladha (.)            |
| 4  |            | when we: eh when we: want to:(.) eh               |
| 5  |            | to kill th::e animal we do some                   |
| 6  | Teacher:   | [slaughter↑ <u>slaughter</u> ↑]                   |
| 7  | Student:   | to slaughter eh the animals (.) eh                |
| 8  |            | we put <u>something</u> for example eh (.)        |
| 9  |            | we put something ↑ in in fire to eh which with eh |
| 10 |            | has a ver::y nice ↑ smell                         |

In this extract (5.12), the question was about what Libyan people do in the religious event of Eid Aladha. In lines 1 to 5, the speaker tried to provide the exact word related to this event in order to ask about what people do in such event. She either did not know the word 'slaughter' or could not remember it. While she was giving an explanation of the event, the teacher provided her with the exact word in line 6 "slaughter↑ slaughter↑". As the student now knew the exact word "slaughter" in line 7, she immediately established her question asking about what people do in that event when they slaughter the animal in



lines 8 to 10.

The interesting thing here is that while the speaker was providing the explanation and looking for the exact word for the event, all of the students turned their faces towards the speaker, following her to try to understand what she was talking about as shown in picture 5.12. Even though students did not display verbal engagement, for example by providing the exact word, they depended solely on gazing towards the speaker to participate in this interaction. In other words, students sometimes prefer to be participated by using embodiments such as gaze when they want to understand the ongoing talk. In this case, all students agreed to produce the same action of gazing towards the speaker in order to be participated in the ongoing activity, as shown in the digitized frame below, 5.12.



**Picture 5.12 (15.20)**

It is clear from this picture above (5.12) that all of the students were participating in the classroom talk by sending their gazes fully towards the speaker. They tried to display that they were following by gazing and turning their heads towards the speaker because they wanted to understand the speaker's words. In this way, they were following and monitoring very closely what was going on.

The next example of gazing towards the speaker comes from the lesson on listening comprehension. Students were asked first to listen to recorded material, picking up key words and then using these words in the correct way to describe someone who was known to all students. The teacher told each group to choose a person to describe without naming them and the other groups had to find out who that person was.

#### **Extract 5.13 (Listening comprehension)**

- |   |            |  |
|---|------------|--|
| 1 | Teacher:   | okay what about this group (.) the la::st group (.)                |
| 2 | Student: → | she is a very sociable person ↑ with a large eh a large eyes       |
| 3 |            | eh and a curly hair (.) eh she's always honest eh (.) eh re eh (.) |
| 4 |            | state eh able eh (.)   |
| 5 | Students:  | stable   |

In the first line of extract 5.13, the teacher gave the floor to the last group to provide their description. In line 2, a student from that group started the description in lines 2 to 4, using key words taken from the recorded material such as sociable, honest, and stable. By producing prosodic markers and small pauses in line 3, the student appeared as if she was looking for the word 'stable', but could not produce it. The production of a wrong word by the

student in line 4, 'state eh able' is good evidence of the student's search for the word stable. Also, the provision of the correct word by other students in line 5 is further evidence of her difficulty in producing that word. In this way, students self-selected to do the teacher's job, providing the correct word because they were non-verbally following and monitoring very closely what was going on. When the speaker started to give the description, all of the students began to use embodied actions to follow her talk and to be participated in the classroom interaction, as shown in picture 5.13.



**Picture 5.13 (01.00.59)**

This picture was captured while the speaker was providing the description to the other groups. By looking at the picture, one can understand that all students were participating in and orienting to what was going on. Except for the speakers' group which appears in the circle, all the students in the other groups were fully gazing and turning their bodies towards the speaker. In this way, they showed participation embodiments as a group by performing the same action during a particular turn-taking.

Another example of gazing towards the current speaker to participate in classroom discussion comes from the lesson on speaking skills where students were required to practise their speaking ability. The classroom in this activity was divided into four groups, and the teacher asked each group to provide the definition of a compound word which should then be identified by the other groups. One group provided the following definition: “*a place you go during the summer for enjoyment*”. Then, students in the other groups tried to figure out what compound word matched this definition, as shown in the following extract, 514:

**Extract 5.14 (Speaking skills)**

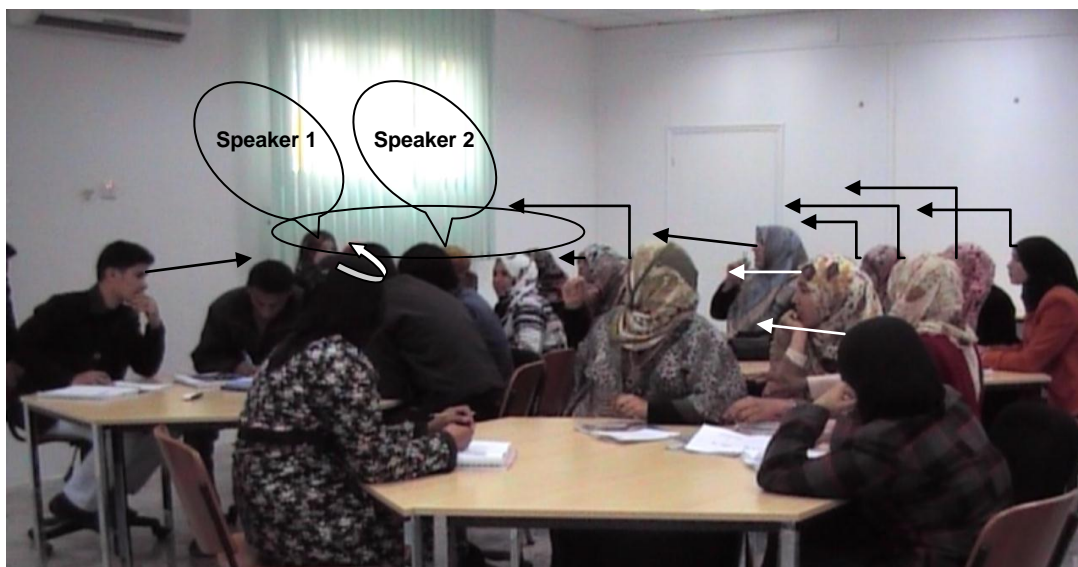
- 1 Teacher: so↑ make it easier to make it clear to them (.) it is not enough
- 2 Students: their definition is very general↑
- 3 Teacher: yeah general exactly↑ (.) it is very general↑ so you have t::o (.)
- 4 Students: specify
- 5 Students: (limitize) it
- 6 Speaker 1: → you can have it in your house
- 7 Speaker 2: and it's limited↑
- 8 Students: (ooo)
- 9 Speaker 1: it's limited and you can have it in your house=
- 10 Speaker 2: it's size e::h\*\*\* its size is limited
- 11 Students: (ooo)
- 12 Students: swimming poo::l .hh.
- 13 Speakers: [[y::es↑]]

In line 1 of this extract (5.14), the teacher showed that the students faced problems in working out what the compound word was from the definition provided because she realised that the information given was insufficient. She invited the speaker to make it easier and clearer. The teacher's invitation

here led some students to self-select to evaluate it as a general definition, in line 2. By providing the word 'yeah' and repeating the students' words in line 3, the teacher again invited the speaker to simplify their definition. Then, speakers began to simplify the definition by giving more explanations in lines 6, 7, 9 and 10. As new information was provided, the other students started to talk together in their groups for negotiating what was going on, as in lines 8 and 11. When the new information had been given to the class and after brief negotiation, some students shouted in unison in line 12 providing the required compound word "swimming poo::l". The speakers in line 13 provided an extended "ye::s", raising their intonation to confirm the correct answer.

Although the teacher gave students the opportunity to self-select in talking to the speakers and to gain as much information as they could, most of the students preferred non-verbal embodiments as their mode of participation. Features in the above extract (5.14) clearly reflect the importance of the embodiments adopted by students in this discussion for participation. In this case, students' gazes, starting at the arrow in extract 5.14, guided the conversation in a specific way. That is, speakers 1 and 2 recognised from the gazes and glances around them that most of students did not understand their definition. Repeating their utterances several times in lines 6, 7, 9 and 10, although nobody had asked them to do so, is very good evidence of the speakers' reciprocity of the gazes around them. Also, their repetition without modifying or adding more detail is further evidence of the importance of these gazes. The listening students did not say anything, but the speakers knew immediately from their gazes that they still needed more detail. In this case,

all of the other students gazed fully towards the speakers in order to follow the ongoing talk, as shown in picture 5.14.



**Picture 5.14 (29.29)**

This picture was taken at the arrow in the above extract (5.14), when the speakers began to provide the other groups with more detail trying to simplify their definition. The gazing by all of the students toward the speakers at the same time can be considered as a whole group participation in the classroom interaction. They were paying attention and following precisely what was going on. Students in this case were orienting to the speaker's utterances without uttering responsive words such as 'yes' or 'what' (Schegloff, 1968).

### **6. 2. 3. Looking at the textbook**

As mentioned above, students use gaze patterns as an action to follow and pay attention to the ongoing activity. In this section, the examples provided show how all of the students in their classrooms gaze fully and at the same time towards the textbook on the desk in front of them in order to show or

elicit participation. This shows that how gaze plays a very important role in indicating the degree of participation in classroom talk (see, e.g., Goodwin, 2002; Kendon, 1990a).

Extract 5.15, for example, was taken from the lesson on speaking skills where students were asked to follow their teacher's talk and participate in the oral discussion. In this activity, the teacher asked some questions to all of the students who were required to give the right answer. By creating such questions, the teacher was trying to regulate class discussion and to ensure that all students were participating and following what was going on.

#### **Extract 5.15 (Reading comprehension)**

- |   |            |  |
|---|------------|--|
| 1 | Teacher:   | oka::y that's the first man↑ (.) that went to the moo::n |
| 2 |            | do you remember what he said↑(.)                         |
| 3 | Student:   | eh that's the first man [for em]                         |
| 4 | Student:   | [step on the moon]=                                      |
| 5 | Teacher: → | =° <u>yes</u> open°(0.2) open pa:ge(.) open pa:ge(0.7)   |
| 6 |            | what was his first words↑(.)                             |
| 7 |            | page six↑(.) what was his first words↑                   |
| 8 | Student:   | that's one small step for a man↑                         |

The teacher at this point asked about the first man that went to the moon, indicating in line 1 that this man had been mentioned in the previous turns. In this case, the teacher provided an extended 'oka::y' with stretching and a small pause followed by raising her intonation with the word "man↑ (.)" in order to draw the students' attention to the new question. Then, she continued, in line 2, to provide the question "do you remember what he said↑(.)". Most of the students were gazing towards the teacher when she asked the question. In

line 3, a student self-selected started to try to answer the question by repeating it. Another self selected student in line 4 overlapped her, providing the teacher's words from line 1. While the students were repeating the question several times without adding any new information, the teacher realised that the students were unable to give the right answer. In this case, most of students seem to be unable to cope with the question, looking at the teacher with questioning gazes waiting for her clarification. This explains why the question was repeated twice by students in lines 3 and 4 without adding new information. Then, the teacher asked students to find the answer in the textbook while she repeated the question in lines 5 to 7. It seems that, as the teacher referred to the textbook, students then directly looked at their textbooks because they gave the answer "that's one small step for a man↑" straightaway in line 8. Moreover, picture 5.15 below shows that students were listening carefully to the teacher and paying attention to her talk. They appeared to flip the pages in their textbooks following the teacher's instructions.



**Picture 5.15 (17.29)**





- 13 Student 1: the poor chap can't walk straight  
14 Student 2: can't he ↑ (.) how's he going to get home  
15 Student 1: I don't know (.) I never have too much to drink  
16 Student 2: don't know eh don't you  
17 Student 1: n::o (.) I can't stand hangovers. (0.2)  
18 Teacher: okay (.)

After the teacher nominated the students to read the dialogue in line 1, all students gazed towards their textbooks in order to follow the written material. At the arrow, in line 2, students began to gaze towards their textbooks on the desks in front of them. Lines 2 to 17 represent the turns produced by the selected students when they were reading the dialogue. While they were reading and their turn-taking was in progress, all students performed the same action together as shown in the following picture:



**Picture 5.16 (06.42)**

This picture was captured when the speakers had started their utterances to read the dialogue. By looking at the picture, one can understand that all

students were involved in the activity and orienting to what was going on. They were bending their bodies forward and fully gazing towards the textbooks in front of them. In this way, they showed participation embodiments as a group because they provided the same action for a particular turn.

The final example of gazing towards the textbook comes from the linguistics lesson. In this lesson, the teacher was reviewing the previous lessons with students. He was reviewing previous lessons, asking known answer questions to the students who were required to be participated in the ongoing discussion as appears in extract 5.17:

#### **Extract 5.17 (Linguistics)**

- 1 Teacher: oka::y let's talk (.) about intellectualism right ↑
- 2 Students: → [[yes]] (0.3)
- 3 Teacher: what's this theory exactly ↑ (.)
- 4 Student: it's em (.) it's mixed between behaviourist a:nd
- 5 the theory of Chomsky (.) [that is
- 6 Teacher: [s::o can we call it] (.)
- 7 ((student's name)) can we ca:ll it ↑ (.) it's just you know (.)
- 8 a kind of compromise ↑
- 9 Students: [[yes]]
- 10 Teacher: compromise between the two theories right.

While the students were answering one of the teacher's questions, the teacher held the floor by producing an extended "oka::y", in line 1. It is clear from the above extract (5.17) that the teacher had taken the floor in order to introduce a new topic, "intellectualism theory", for discussion. In this situation,

the teacher's first turn included prosodic markers such as extended words "oka:y", small pauses "let's talk (.)" and emphasised words "intellectualism". By using such markers, he provided an opportunity for students to participate in this discussion. He was, in this way, eliciting knowledge from the students that was already known by the teacher (Koshik, 2002, p. 288). By answering [[yes]] in line 2, the students showed that they were following their teacher's words. Then, the teacher marked their verbal answer as acceptable by asking the question in line 3, "what's this theory exactly ↑ (.)". The answer was provided by a self-selecting student in lines 4 and 5; since this question was for all students and the teacher did not specify who should answer. The teacher then provided a summary of the answer overlapping the student in lines 6 to 8 because, as indicated above, this was an example of eliciting knowledge from the students that was already known by the teacher. However, all of the students were non-verbally participated in the ongoing situation by gazing towards their textbooks, as shown in the following picture.



**Picture 5.17 (07.55)**

It is clear from the image above (5.17) that all students were gazing fully towards the textbooks on the desks in front of them. This picture occurred at the point of the arrow in the above extract (5.17), in line 2. As the teacher mentioned to the new topic for discussion, all students turned their gazes suddenly from the teacher towards their textbooks in order to find the relevant information. In this way, they were following and monitoring very closely what was going on.

#### **6. 2. 4. Hand-raising**

Hand-raising is a very important interactional device employed by students for turn-allocation in multiparty settings. As Sahlström (1999) indicates, the raising of the hand in the classroom represents active participation (see also Mortensen, 2008). He also shows how students direct their gaze and their face towards the teacher when they raise their hands to bid for talk. Students strategically use hand-raising in order to demonstrate their reciprocity during plenary talk. Sahlström (1999) also refers to the importance of the timing of the raising hands. Such these studies show how crucial it is to consider students' bidding actions when examining student participation in classroom interaction.

In this study, the concern is therefore to show how hand-raising represents students' engagement as a form of embodied action for group participating in their classrooms. This section attempts to show how students using hand-raising to reveal that they are following and paying attention to ongoing activities.

The analysis in this section is primarily based on the occurrence of hand-raising by all students at the same time. In fact, hand-raising as used in classroom participation is different from gazing because it is normally used for holding the floor and answering specific questions. It seems that hand-raising is used by students in a systematically coordinated manner to show that they are following and participating in the ongoing activity.

In the following extract 5.18, taken from the lesson on speaking skills, students were asked to answer questions from their textbooks for classroom discussion. Each question was to be read aloud by students, leading into an open discussion, and then they would give the right answer. By asking them to read each question aloud to all of the students, the teacher here aimed to regulate the class discussion in order to ensure that most of the students would be involved in classroom participation and participate more deeply in what was going on.

**Extract 5.18 (Reading comprehension)**

- 1 Teacher: ok↑ question(.) e::::m three
- 2 Student: → yes
- 3 Students: [[yes]]
- 4 Teacher: ((name of a student))

In line 1 in extract 5.18 above, the teacher asked for a volunteer to answer question three. She held the floor by producing “ok”, raising her intonation and extending her voice. She asked students to answer the following question “three”. By saying “yes” at the same time in line 3, most students showed their willingness to answer this question. In fact, the teacher did not realise from

this “yes” that all of the students were willing to answer the question. Rather, hand-raising is important here in showing students’ participation in the ongoing interaction. As can be seen in picture 5.18, most of the students were raising their hands to participate.



**Picture 5.18 (29.38)**

This image was at the time of the arrow in extract 5.18 above after the teacher had asked for a volunteer to answer question three. Immediately after the teacher’s turn, all students showed their willingness to answer the question by raising their hands. The teacher nominated one student by saying her name out loud in line 4. Then, all students, including the selected speaker, immediately dropped their hands to the table. In this way, all students, even those who were not nominated, showed participation embodiments as a group because they provided the same action for a particular turn-taking. They were following and monitoring very closely their teacher’s talk.

Extract 5.19 below presents another example of hand-raising by almost all students together for classroom participation. In this situation, the classroom was doing a textbook activity on phonetics. The exercise was about identifying each vowel sound, pronouncing it in the correct way, and giving its description according to its position in the IPA vowels chart drawn on the board which represents the oral cavity where the sounds are produced. This example provides a particularly clear demonstration of group participation embodiments, as all students are attuned together and translating their teacher's talk according to their understanding. The extract 5.19 begins as the teacher switched to the next-activity in which students would put the vowel sounds in their positions on the board.

#### **Extract 5.19 (Phonetics)**

- 1 Teacher: let's do something else okay. while we're (.) describing
- 2 the vowels ↓ can we ↑ (.) can we put the vowels of the
- 3 quadrilateral on board ok ↓
- 4 Students: → [[yes]]
- 5 Teacher: can you put them (.) on the board (.) yes who ca::n (.)
- 6 yes who did number one ↑ (.) who did vowel number one↑ (.)

In lines 1 to 3, the teacher provided his question for students to start the new activity. All students showed their understanding of the activity directly by raising their hands and calling [[yes]], in line 4, as in picture 5.19. This image shows that all students were participating in competing for their teacher's attention. While the students continued to raise their hands, the teacher repeated his question several times in lines 5 and 6 in order to select who to choose to answer while he scanned the classroom, as shown in picture 5.19.





**Picture 5.19 (02.34)**

This picture, taken at the time of the arrow in the extract 5.19, shows the importance of the embodied action adopted by students in this situation for participation. Raising their hands in unison at the same time reflected their willingness to answer the teacher's question. They raised their hands and call [[yes]] immediately after the teacher asked for a volunteer to put the vowel sound in its right place on the board. In this situation, all students again showed participation embodiments as a group because they provided the same action in a particular turn. They were also following and monitoring their teacher's talk.

### **6. 2. 5. Facial expressions and head-nodding**

Other embodied actions such as facial expressions, head-nodding patterns, and body shifts together with talk are always employed by participants to indicate turn-taking (Streeck, 2009, pp. 174-6). For example, facial expressions and head nods can be used as a turn completion. In general,

these patterns in institutional interaction are used as turns and are always accompanied by students' gazes directed towards the teacher to show reciprocity. The use of facial expressions and head-nodding patterns is therefore an interesting interactional phenomenon which is employed by students as turn-taking in different sequential positions.

As provided in this section, facial expression and head-nodding patterns were also used by all students at the same time to display that they were following and paying attention to what was going on. Students in classrooms often provide smiles, laughter, serious faces and/or head nods as reactions to show or elicit their positions of agreement, disagreement or surprise. This section focuses on how such patterns are deployed by students to indicate their degree of participation in classroom talk.

Extract 5.20, for example, was taken from the lesson on reading comprehension where students were asked to prepare a question for classroom discussion. Students were divided into groups and each group provided a question leading to an open discussion before they gave the right answer. In this activity, the teacher tried to regulate class discussion to ensure that all students were engaged deeply with what was going on. While the students were talking together in their groups to answer the question provided by one group, 'why women wear the wedding ring', their teacher held the floor and provided students with the answer as a summary of their discussion as follows:

### Extract 5.20 (Reading comprehension)

- 1 Teacher: one of your colleagues (.)  
2 that she's read it in a magazine↑(.)  
3 it's because (.) em (.)  
4 to become closer to the heart↑  
5 Students: → = [[yes .hh.]] ((**some students talk to each other**))  
6 Teacher: °\* ye:s (.) ok: (0. 1) .hh.°  
7 ok↑ (.) let's see: (.)  
8 your colleagues here  
9 Student: the Roman↑ who: invented the  
10 wedding ring because they think (.)  
11 there're veins (.) there is a vein (.)  
12 from ring .hhh finger to the heart↑\*  
13 Teacher: = ok there's a vein↑

In lines 1 to 4, the teacher answered the question, giving the reason for wearing the wedding ring. It seems that the teacher had just heard this answer given by a student during the group discussions in answer to this question, because she says softly in line 1 “one of your colleagues”. All of the students showed their agreement with the teacher’s answer by calling [[yes]], in line 5, together with laughter and side comments. Picture 5.20 shows that all students were actually participating. While students did continue laughing and making other sounds, the teacher began to hold the floor again by providing prosodic markers such as extended words and small pauses in lines 6 and 7. By using these markers, the teacher was asking the students to pay attention. In line 8, the teacher then invited students to listen to the answer from the student who first asked this question. The right answer was provided in lines 9 to 12 and the teacher mentioned the key word in this answer in the last line. Picture 5.20 below also reflects some other features of this extract.



**Picture 5.20 (24.10)**

This picture was taken at the time of the arrow in the above extract (5.20). By looking at the frame, it can be seen that all students showed the same type of participation in agreeing with their teacher's talk. What is interesting here is that while some students participated by providing the answer [[yes]], others just provided smiles and/or laughter to express their participation. Then, the teacher marked their verbal and non-verbal answers as acceptable by providing 'yes', 'ok' and laughter in line 6, “\* ye:s (.) ok: (0. 1) .hh.” immediately after the students' participation shown in the above picture. Even though some students did not provide any comments except the expression on their faces, the teacher recognised that they absolutely agreed with her about the reason why women wear the wedding ring. Therefore, smiles and laughter provided by students together and at the same time expressed the students' orientation towards the ongoing talk, in this case, their agreement.

Another example of facial expressions used to reveal students' participation as agreement with the ongoing talk is provided in the following extract 5.21.

This example comes from the lesson on speaking skills where students were carrying out exercises to improve their speaking ability by providing definitions of compound nouns. They were asked to define in their own words the compound noun “hair-dryer” without using the actual words ‘hair’ or ‘dryer’ as shown in the following extract (5.21):

**Extract 5.21 (Speaking skills)**

- 1      Teacher:      n::o the compound ((name of student)) (.) hair or dryer ↑
- 2                      don't use (.) don't use either word (.) oka::y
- 3      Students:      [[yes]]
- 4      Teacher:      ((name of student)) (0.2)
- 5      Student:      it's an electric machine ↑ which is used to warm the wet part
- 6                      of the head (.)
- 7      Teacher: →    wo::w (.) ni::ce ↑ .hh. okay yes another definition

In line 1, the teacher marked the previous definition provided for the hair-dryer as unacceptable because she started her turn with an extended ‘n::o’ and ended by repeating the instructions for this task twice in line 2. Some students called ‘yes’ in line 3 to establish a different answer at the first available opportunity to take the floor after the teacher’s assessment of the previous definition. When the teacher gave the floor to the next speaker by calling her name in line 4, the new definition of the compound noun “hair-dryer” appears in lines 5 and 6. In this case, the teacher seemed to be very happy with this definition because she produced in line 7 extended words of surprise and acceptance with laughter as well, “wo::w (.) ni::ce ↑ .hh.”. Furthermore, all students displayed their participation at the same time with the same

reactions of facial expression and head-nodding to reveal their agreement with their colleague's answer as can be seen in the following picture:



**Picture 5.21 (12.05)**

This picture was taken at the point of the arrow in the above extract immediately after the new definition of the compound noun was voiced. It shows that all students were participated in through their smiles and/or head-nodding to express their agreement with the answer provided. The teacher again recognised from the participation embodiments in the ongoing task that all of the students absolutely agreed with their colleague's answer. In this way, immediately and without any comment needing to be provided by the students, the teacher asked for a new definition to continue this task. Therefore, these embodiments of facial expressions and head-nodding established by all of the students together at the same time demonstrated the students' agreement with the ongoing talk.

The previous examples of participation embodiments revealed how students as a whole group express their agreement with the ongoing talk. In what follows, however, the embodiments of facial expressions and head-nodding express instead students' disagreement with the surrounding talk in progress. Extract 5.22, for example, comes from the lesson on reading comprehension where students were divided into groups and each group was asked to provide a question for classroom discussion. This extract (5.22) was taken from a discussion held in order to answer the question provided by one group as follows.

**Extract 5.22 (Reading comprehension)**

- 1     Teacher:     yes↑(.) ((name of student))
- 2     Student:     because because women don't care about anything↑
- 3                     [and↑ em]
- 4     Students: → [laughter in group]
- 5     Student:     men always↑(.) men always eh:(0.2)
- 6                     responsible on everything↓
- 7     Teacher:     o:ka::y(.) it's not that they don't care↑

Here, while students discussed the question of 'why do women live longer than men?', the teacher in line 1 gave the floor to a male student who had called out to provide his comment on this question. The comment of the nominated student was that "women don't care about anything↑" in line 2, and it seemed to be unacceptable. At the arrow in line 4, all of the other students as a whole group overlapped the speaker's turn with laughter to show their disagreement with his point. In this case, the laughter was primarily accompanied by gazing towards the teacher who would often be expected to



provide feedback. Even though the students provided no words to reveal their attitude, the selected speaker understood that his point had been rejected by the others. He tried to justify and defend his point of view by providing more utterances in lines 5 and 6. Following the speaker's justification, the teacher produced a long "o:ka:y" in line 7 followed by a small pause in order to take the floor to give her feedback which came to support the students' rejection: "o:ka:y(.) it's not that they don't care↑". Moreover, the students' disagreement with the speaker's point of view is shown in picture 5.22 below.



**Picture 5.22 (6.02)**

This frame was at the time of the arrow in extract 5.22 in which students were just providing smiles and laughter as a group but without any verbal comment on the speaker's talk. The teacher, on the other hand, recognised immediately that all of the students did not have the same opinion as the current speaker and that they were in total disagreement with him. In this way, it is clear that



students' embodiments in the form of facial expressions actually represented their close participation in the ongoing talk.

Another example of classroom participation through facial expressions and/or head-nodding to show students' disagreement with ongoing talk is provided in the following extract 5.23. This example comes from the linguistics lesson in which the teacher was leading students to review the previous lessons. Since the teacher led this task which is of a type often related to written material such as textbook, verbal opportunities for classroom participation might be not available to all students. In such cases, they may resort to embodiments to participate in the ongoing talk. Extract 5.23 below is an example of such participation where the teacher controlled the distribution of turn-taking:

**Extract 5.23 (Linguistics)**

- |    |           |  |
|----|-----------|--|
| 1  | Teacher:  | they couldn't (.) one thing ↑we have to be <u>clear</u> about it (.)   |
| 2  |           | they could produce sou::nds=   |
| 3  | Students: | = [[yes]]  |
| 4  | Teacher:  | but they can [never ↑ (.)]   |
| 5  | Student:  | [never speak]  |
| 6  | Teacher:  | produce [a language]   |
| 7  | Students: | [a language]   |
| 8  | Teacher:  | and there is a big difference between producing sou::nds and           |
| 9  |           | learning a la:::nguage (.) they could (0.1) imitate great theory=      |
| 10 | Students: | yeh  |
| 11 | Teacher:  | but a:re ↑ the question <u>is</u> (.) a::re they a::ble (.) to produce |
| 12 |           | meaningful language ↑  |
| 13 | Students: | → [[no]]   |
| 14 | Teacher:  | absolutely not   |

In this extract (5.23), the teacher and students were talking about how children produce words and utterances in their first language. While the teacher, who had the leading role in the ongoing conversation, was providing information about the way in which children learn language and produce sounds in lines 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 9, the students were producing turns combining prosodic markers with overlapping and completing their teacher's utterances in lines 3, 5, 7, and 10. By using such markers, students were trying to show that they were following and that the information provided by the teacher was already known. Then, the teacher asked students an explicit question in line 11, "a::re they a::ble (.) to produce meaningful language↑" in order to elicit knowledge from the students that was already known by the teacher (Koshik, 2002, p. 288). By answering [[no]] in line 13, the students showed that they were following their teacher's words. In line 14, the teacher immediately confirmed their answer by repeating it with the word "absolutely". Although some students did not produce any verbal answers to this question, the teacher understood from their similar embodiments provided by the whole class that all of the students knew the same answer. The following picture 5.23 taken at the time of the arrow in the above extract (5.23) shows the students' similar movements at the same time:



**Picture 5.23 (06.37)**

It can be seen from the picture (5.23) that all students expressed disagreement as their answer to the question of children being able to produce meaningful language when they learn to speak. It is apparent that the students were shaking their heads at the same time, gazing towards the teacher with serious expressions on their faces. In this way, all students participated in the classroom discussion by employing similar embodiments to display their attitudes.

The analysis of facial expressions and head-nodding patterns has shown that they had a multifunction role in the organisation of student participation. They employed by students with a combination of prosodic markers, and on their own instead of turn-taking. Also, these patterns were used together with students' gazes directed towards their teacher to show reciprocity and following the ongoing discussion.

### **6. 2. 6. Group-making**

Group-making is also a very important interactional device employed by students to have opportunities for oral participation in multiparty settings. The focus in this section is to show how the making of small groups represents students' movements as another form of participation in their classrooms. The analysis in this section is primarily based on the occurrence of small group-making as a reaction to the ongoing talk by all students at the same time. Since oral participation in the whole class by all of the students at the same time is impractical, discussion in small groups is good way of giving all students an opportunity to do so. In this way, group-making for classroom participation is similar in some ways to the whole classroom discussion because it is normally used for giving the opportunity to all students for discussion and oral participation. It seems that students employ group-making in systematic coordination to show that they are following and participating in the ongoing activity.

In this section, the examples provided show how EFL students in their classrooms form small groups in order to reflect on the ongoing talk. This shows that the movements involved in forming small groups play a very important role to indicate degrees of participation in the classroom talk. Extract 5.24, for example, was taken from the lesson on reading comprehension where students were instructed to prepare a question for classroom discussion based either on what they had read in their textbooks or on their previous knowledge. They were divided into groups and each group had to ask their question, leading into an open discussion before they gave

the right answer. All students here showed their participation in what was going on.

#### **Extract 5.24 (Reading skills)**

- 1       Teacher:       I want you to prepa::re (.) or to provide↑ me your own em (.)  
2                       I want you↑ (.) to think of questions ↓right now (.)  
3                       to provide me your own (.) but these questions  
4                       will help you (.) think of some other questions (.) ok::ay  
5                       → ok::ay please start ↑ (.) you have five minutes eh  
6                       to prepare at least one or two questions (.) five ↑minutes

In extract (5.24) the teacher provided instructions to the students for starting the new activity. All of the students showed their understanding of the teacher's instructions directly by creating their own groups as in picture 5.24. This image shows that all students were participating in. They mainly appeared to mirror their teacher's talk. That is, when the teacher asked students to start their discussions in small groups, the subsequent image (5.24) shows their following the ongoing talk provided by their teacher:



**Picture 5.24 (36.28)**

Picture 5.24 occurred at the time of the arrow in the above extract (5.24) where all students started to reorient together in small groups to produce questions for discussion. In this regard, all students seemed to be following their teacher's talk and taking advantage of a good opportunity to participate in oral discussion in small groups. Following this discussion, each group would then provide their own question to the classroom for discussion.

The following example "extract 5.25" was taken from the lesson on listening comprehension, where students were asked first to listen to recorded material picking up key words and then describing themselves in small groups using these words correctly. Then, each group was asked to choose one student to describe their colleagues using the same words taken from the recorded material. Each student was asked to describe themselves aloud in their group in order to be involved in an open discussion. By following small groups, the

teacher here aimed to regulate the class discussion to ensure that most students were involved in classroom participation and engaged more deeply with what was going on:

**Extract 5.25 (Listening comprehension)**

- 1 Teacher: so (.) I'll give you ↑ abo::ut em fou::r minutes to just discuss  
2 roughly about eh (.) eh what did yo::u had (.) a::nd eh (.)  
3 we'll change into groups ↓ okay (.)  
4 → s:o four minutes ↑ (.)

The teacher in this extract (5.25) asked students to describe themselves in their own groups. He gave them about four minutes to provide their descriptions. In this way, the teacher provided all of the students with an opportunity to speak and participate orally, which would be impossible to do when they were in the larger group as a whole class. Students seem to be waiting for such opportunities because they started to shape their small groups immediately as shown in the following picture 5.25.



**Picture 5.25 (39.34)**

This picture was captured at the point of the arrow in extract 5.25 above, and the students appeared to be speaking together in small groups. In this respect, they seemed to be immediately translating their teacher's talk into their embodiments. Therefore, these embodiments of group-making established by all students together and at the same time expressed the students' understanding and agreement with the ongoing talk.



## **7. Summary**

From the data analysis, it becomes apparent that student participation involves much more than just speaking. Students were demonstrating similar and various movements to follow what was going on through different types of embodied actions. They were not only participating by speaking, but were also constructing a kind of group participation through the distribution of signals between themselves. In addition to speaking, they were gazing, smiling, nodding heads, glancing at each other, and orienting to the teacher when they wanted to participate in the classroom discussion. In this chapter, student participation is described as sustained engagement in understanding how participants act as collaborative members (see, e.g., Irvine, 1996; Hanks, 1996; Goodwin and Goodwin, 2005; Goodwin, 2006). It shows how students constructed a kind of 'ecology' where they coordinated with each other in a specific sequential environment which produced social actions using "the public visibility of the actions being performed by each others' bodies" (Goodwin 2000a, p. 1518).

Based on the above analysis, the present chapter extends existing knowledge of student participation by describing their participation in classroom discussion. Although the oral participation can be considered the main basic indicator of student participation, data analysis shows that many students chose to participate nonverbally during the classroom discussion. This chapter therefore explained in detail how students can be participated in classroom discussion through non-verbal actions.

To sum up, this chapter has described how student participation is organised during the ongoing activity and classroom discussion. The findings reveal that students employ various types of embodied actions during turn-taking in progress. They produce various patterns of gazing, head-nodding, hand-raising, facial expressions, and other behaviours to compensate to oral participation. From the examples analysed in this chapter, embodiments used for participating in classroom discussion were classified into two different groups. First, students provide these embodied actions as various different movements related to classroom discussion. Second, students produce similar movements to be participated in the ongoing tasks. In both cases, students utilize such types of participation to cope with the surrounding talk. Both groups of the embodied actions were adopted by students for different purposes. For example, students used different patterns of gaze to express understanding or to follow the ongoing talk, facial expressions and head nodding for agreement/disagreement, hand-raising to take the floor, and making small groups for discussion. Moreover, the examples provided in this chapter are part of a larger set of data showing how students in classroom settings establish patterns of participation embodiments to be participated in oral discussion.

## **Chapter Six**

### **DESK TALK**

This chapter describes desk talk used by students in EFL classrooms while turns-at-talk are in progress. It argues that this type of talk closely relates to the ongoing teacher-student classroom talk. The chapter starts by describing this type of talk, and by suggesting two categories as it occurs in the classroom. It then goes on to describe how students, depending on used activity, employ different types of desk talk relating to the ongoing discussion. Finally, a summary of the data analysis and examples given in this chapter is provided.

## **1. Introduction**

Desk talk is used by students as a specific social practice in EFL classrooms while turns-at-talk are in progress. Students may resort to desk talk to compensate for the lack of opportunity for participating orally in whole class. In this way, student participation may not only be organised by an explicit turn taking process but also by using implicit turns beyond the ongoing discussion. The main purpose of this chapter is therefore to investigate how student talk behind the scenes is related to the oral discussion in the classroom. Material was collected by videotaping various lessons and placing audio recorders among students in different areas in the classroom. The data obtained show that students' talk behind the scenes plays a significant role in their understanding and following the ongoing interaction. This type of talk, in either the mother tongue or target language, helps students to be involved indirectly in classroom oral interaction.

This type of talk was captured using a video camera and a set of digital audio recorders in the classroom. Since student-student talk in the background was not captured by the visual recording, it was provided by digital audio recorders placed away from the camera in different positions in the classroom. To examine whether the desk talk which took place in class was related to the ongoing oral discussion, a variety of activities from different lessons needed to be recorded, where the exercises were of great importance so as to awaken students' interest in classroom participation. Therefore, it was necessary to investigate what students were saying in the background of the classroom by providing different patterns from audio recordings.

## **2. Student Turns behind Oral Discussion**

Student talk behind classroom oral discussion is characterised in this study as desk talk, which includes any side utterance that is related to the ongoing classroom interaction. Students often exploit such side turns to compensate for their lack of participation in classroom oral discussion in different tasks, especially in teacher-fronted activities where students are controlled to have the opportunity to participate orally. Because the explicit classroom oral discussion is teacher-led, teachers have the right to nominate participants and decide which students may talk and when. Therefore, students resort to desk talk in order to orientate themselves to what is around them and, thus, the more the class is controlled by the teacher, the more behind the scenes speaking students become.

Furthermore, the topics used in the classroom for oral discussion may sometimes be difficult to understand (see, e.g., Brown and Yule, 1983; Van Lier, 1988), which may be another reason for students to increase their desk talk. In this case, in order to understand the ongoing classroom activity, students might resort to this type of talk for different purposes such as giving and asking for information, making comments and expressing feelings. With such factors in mind, the desk talk within classroom oral interaction is looked at in some detail below.

## **3. Desk Talk within Classroom Turn Taking**

The desk talk beyond teacher-student classroom oral interaction dealt with in this chapter includes utterances within the turn-taking in progress. It can be

considered as having a kind of interactional organisation in which participants also orientate themselves in turn-taking patterns. These turn taking patterns are basically related to the ongoing activity. In this way, desk talk seems to be associated with the wider pedagogical aims, and when turn-taking changes they change accordingly. This means that desk talk follows to some extent Seedhouse's (2004, p. 101) description of turn-taking in the classroom. He shows that turn-taking is organised differently depending on the pedagogical activities. Furthermore, turn-taking in classroom has different types of interactional organisation, such as 'adjacency pairs', 'preference', and 'repair' (see also Seedhouse, 2005, p. 167). Similarly, turn-taking in desk talk is often organised as adjacency pairs in which either both parts are provided or the second part may not be immediately produced.

Such utterances involve self-selection, where students quietly initiate an action and their desk partners respond in a similar way. This type of talk sometimes occurs in a sequential environment which is similar in some ways to that in the general patterns of classroom interaction. It seems to follow the general pattern where the teacher initiates an action, the students respond and the teacher evaluates the response. This format was originally described by Bellack et al. (1966) in terms of *soliciting*, responding and reacting moves; and this has since become known as teacher initiation, student response and teacher feedback 'IRF' (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), initiation-response-evaluation 'IRE' (Mehan, 1979) or question-answer-comment sequences (McHoul, 1978; Markee, 2000). Student participation here is controlled by the teacher's initiating move and is described in terms of responses to the

teacher's actions.

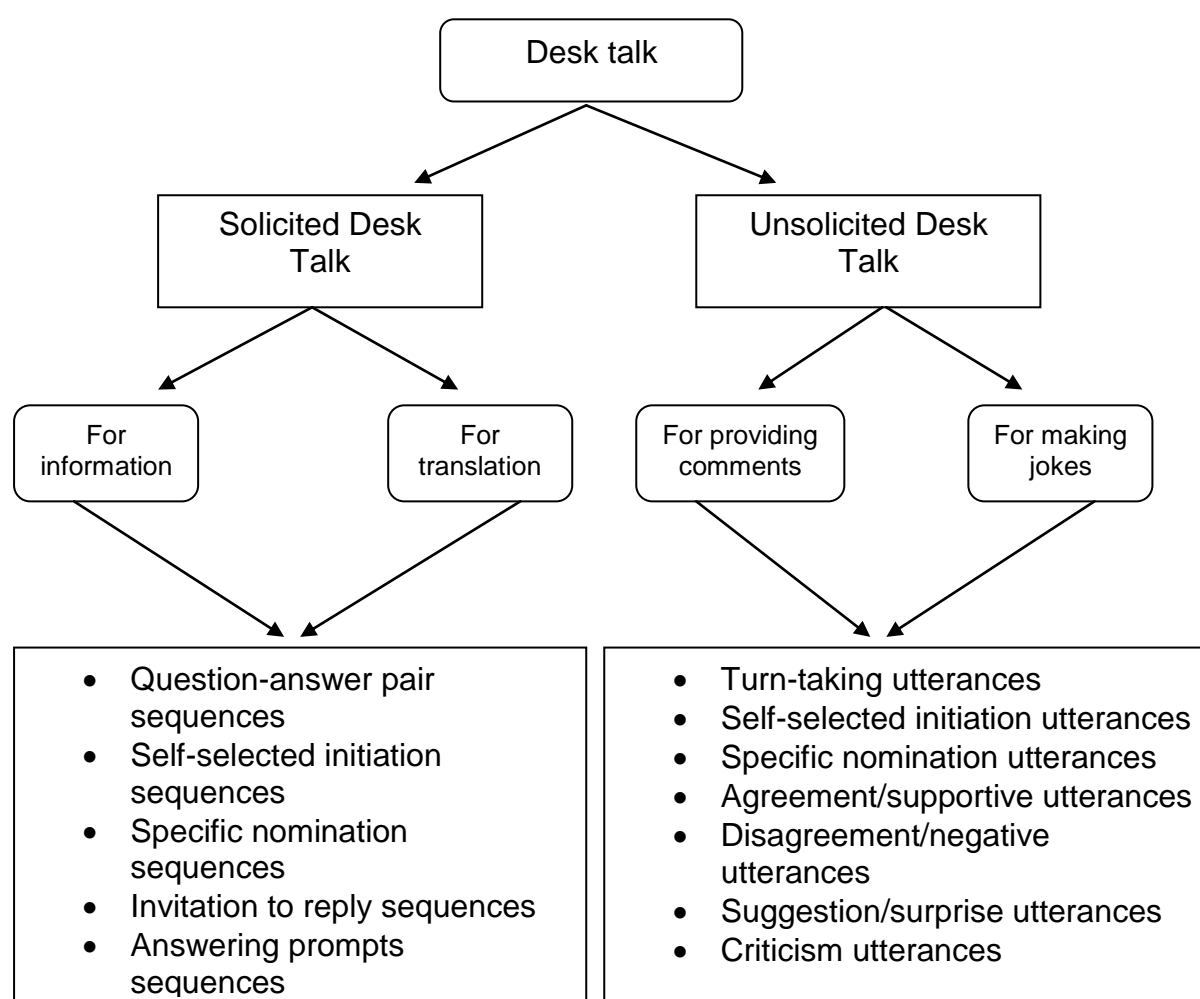
Desk talk may also involve other types of utterance where students self-select to be behind the scene speakers. Here, desk talk again seems to follow another general pattern of classroom interaction where the next-speaker self selects to participate (see, e.g. Lerner, 2003). Similar to the above formats, therefore, students conduct such desk turns with their desk partners either as 'solicitation' where one student responds to their desk partner who has initiated an action; or as 'unsolicitation' where they self-select to initiate utterances without prompts to do so.

In neither case do they have the right or obligation to speak, but they utilize such a type of turn-taking in response to the surrounding atmosphere. These desk utterances are always unexpected to the observer because the students themselves control the initiation of their turns while classroom discussion is in progress. In addition, desk talk is organised in ways similar to those in the general patterns occurring in classroom interaction, where either the current speaker selects the next-speaker or the next-speaker self selects to participate (see, e.g. Lerner, 2003). This study, therefore, contributes to the understanding of EFL classroom participation by looking at the nature of desk talk beyond the explicit oral discussion in teacher-fronted activities.

As mentioned above, desk talk within turn-taking in progress is generally classified in this study into two main categories: solicited and unsolicited desk talk. Solicited desk talk involves a student's prompt for the desk partner to

reply, and is particularly adopted by students for: 1) giving and asking for information, or 2) providing translation. This category of desk talk builds on prompts from a student followed by responses from a student sitting next to them. Conversely, unsolicited desk talk is exclusively involves self-selected initiation without prior prompts. Unsolicited desk talk is also adopted by students for: 1) providing comments to express feelings, or 2) making jokes. Figure 6.1 below shows the main sequences of student utterances in desk talk.

**Figure 6.1: Sequential environments of desk talk**





Since this type of talk in both categories is generally unobservable, it is analysed here to identify how to be associated with the general direction of ongoing classroom activities. As explained in the examples provided below, this type of talk appears to be related to the interactional sequences of the overall classroom discussion. Students seem to engage in desk talk as an opportunity to participate, despite the fact that the classroom oral discussion is still in progress.

### **3. 1. Solicited desk talk**

As mentioned above, solicited desk talk starts with student prompts followed by responses while the classroom activity is in progress. In teacher-student classroom talk, student participation is mostly expected to follow a teacher's prompt (Mehan, 1979; Green et al., 1988), whereas in student-student desk talk a prompt can occur as an initiation, or another student is invited to respond to a particular question or cue, where participants open the floor to each other with fewer restrictions on participation. These invitations to desk talk are always prompts in which the other students are expected to respond. Therefore, such prompts are often (but not always) used as solicitations for student responses behind the scenes during classroom oral interaction. Examples of the phenomenon of solicited desk talk which occur alongside with the oral discussion in progress are provided below.

#### **3. 1. 1. Solicited desk talk for information**

Classroom desk talk is sometimes initiated by students to gain information about issues raised in the teacher-student oral discussion which are unclear.

These initiations are often used as specific invitations followed by responses, such as when students provide answers to prompts initiated by their desk partners. Although student-student talk in this case occurs beyond the classroom discussion, it is similar to one of the participation patterns identified by Mehan (1979) in which the teacher initiates an invitation to reply. Instead teacher invitations to reply allow all students to self-select, student desk prompts beyond the classroom discussion act as specific invitations for a particular student to respond. Illustrative examples from the data collected in this study are provided as follows.

In extract 6.1 below, the teacher was reviewing the students' understanding of a textbook activity on vowel sounds using the board, nominating particular students to provide answers, or prompting choral replies. The exercise was about identifying a sound; pronouncing it in the correct way, giving a description of it, and placing this sound in the right position in the IPA vowels chart drawn on the board which represents the oral cavity where these vowels are produced. The extract begins as the teacher asked about the second vowel to be identified and described:

#### **Extract 6.1 (03.49)**

- 1 T: oka:y (.) the second vowel↑=
- 2 Ss: =yes yes
- 3 T: y:es plea:se ↑ (1.4) ° °
- 4 S1: → شن يقصد اي فاول  
**which vowel does he mean**
- 5 S2: → ثاني واحد هنا  
**the second one here ((pointing to the textbook))**

The teacher's turn in line 1, "*okay the second vowel*", asking about the vowel was provided to prompt students as an invitation to answer. Although the teacher initiated the sequence in this case, students still self-selected to respond. The teacher's prompt was an invitation to bid, where the teacher indicated that students should raise their hands to be called on. Students in line 2 confirmed this invitation to bid by saying together "yes yes", raising their hands because they knew the answer. The teacher marked this action as acceptable in line 3, saying "*yes please*" as he nominated a particular student to provide the answer. While the oral discussion between the teacher and students was going on, desk talk relating to this discussion was produced by two students in the background of the classroom. Lines 4 and 5 show these students' participation beyond the classroom discussion. S1 seemed to be unable to understand the teacher's question, saying "*which vowel does he mean*". She invited S2 sitting next to her to provide her with some information in response. Her prompt in line 4 was a self-selection to initiate such a type of desk talk, opening the floor to S2 to provide an answer. In line 5, S2 pointed to the textbook referring to the answer saying "*the second one here*".

Extract 6.2 gives another example of desk talk in which one student oriented to another student's invitation as a call for information. In this extract the class was going over the practice from the same lesson on vowel sounds. The focus of this extract is on lines '3 and 4' as an example of desk talk participation in which S2 was asking for information beyond the classroom discussion:

### Extract 6.2 (05.13)

- 1 S1: I think the diagram is very necessary t::o  
2 [sho:w us↑ the position of each sound↓]  
3 S2: → اي ديقرام ، هدا  
which diagram, is it this one ((pointing to the textbook))  
4 S3: → ما نعرفش  
I don't know  
5 T: [y:es]  
6 S1: of vowels↓

In lines 1-2, S1 was talking about the IPA vowels chart drawn in the textbook which represents the oral cavity where the vowels are produced. While she was talking about the necessity of this IPA vowel chart as a diagram for identifying vowel sounds, the teacher overlapped her utterance with 'yes' in line 5, and then S1 continued on line 6 to complete her turn from line 2. It is interesting here that, during this explicit talk, desk talk was produced by two students in lines 3 and 4 while turn taking was in progress. S2 in line 3 initiated the desk talk by pointing to a diagram in the textbook. She asked S3 who was sitting next to her about the diagram mentioned in line 1 by S1. The answer to this prompt was "*I don't know*", provided by S3 in line 4. Although this answer followed S2's prompt asking for information relating to the ongoing classroom talk, it can be seen that either S3 did not know which diagram the classroom discussion was referring to, or she did not want to extend this particular desk talk beyond the classroom discussion.

From the above examples, it can be clearly seen that solicited desk talk occurs when a particular student replies to a specific invitation as a prompt for

giving information. Although this occurs beyond the classroom discussion, it seems usually to be related to the ongoing oral activities employed by the teacher and students in the classroom.

Extract 6.3 below taken from a lesson on listening comprehension is another example of desk talk beyond teacher-student discussion. In this activity, students were asked to listen carefully to a tape-recording of descriptions of people. They were asked to take notes and select the important words used for description while they listened to the recordings. Then, each student was given a minute to describe her/himself to their group, as shown in extract 6.3.

**Extract 6.3 (2.48)**

- 1 T: one minute each person↑ for example↑ I describe myself for one
- 2 minute (.) and then the next person↓∞
- 3 S1: → شينو شينو  
(what what)
- 4 S2: → كيف توصفي نفسك  
(how to describe yourself)
- 5 S1: → كيف نوصف نفسي  
(how to describe myself)
- 6 S2: → أيه أنت شينو مثلا  
(yes like what are you)

In their desk turns in lines 3 to 6 in this example, the students tried to orient to the teacher's instructions in lines 1 and 2 which were provided as an invitation to describe themselves to their groups. The teacher provided an example to explain what their action in this activity should be in lines 1-2, saying for example 'I describe myself for one minute and then the next person'. S1

seemed unable to understand the teacher's request because, in line 3, she immediately elicited information from S2 who was sitting next to her: "*what what*". By initiating such a question in her mother tongue, S1 gave S2 a specific invitation to assure the next turn for knowledge display. Accordingly, S2 also provided the answer in her mother tongue in line 4, "*how to describe yourself*", to help S1 understand the teacher's request. However, S1 was still unable to understand because, in line 5, she repeated S2's answer, but this time as another question, '*how to describe myself?*'. Once she finished repeating the first answer in the form of question, S2 provided the answer in a different way as further explanation in line 6, '*yes like what are you*'.

This desk talk participation was solicited by S1 prompting S2's response, and resembles the self-selection pattern of student participation in teacher-fronted activity. Student participation in these sequential desk turns is closely related to the teacher's prompts. The desk utterances thus occur in the same way as those in the explicit classroom turn taking.

Desk turns prompted by students for information seem also to be common in teacher-fronted activity, often falling within a large sequence that is in progress. In extract 6.4 below, the teacher was explaining to students how to do the next activity by using key words from the listening material to describe themselves. Also, during the larger sequence of teacher's turn in progress, desk turns by two students beyond the teacher-student interaction were recorded as follows:

### Extract 6.4 (11.32)

- 1 T: okay (.) are you ready↑ (0.3) at least choose one person from  
2 your table (0.2) to describe each person as you've heard ok↓  
3 just one person per table↓ just one person oka:y (.)  
4 to describe your group↑ okay (.) s::o decide among yourself  
5 who will be that person↑ because we will have a next activity↑  
6 (0.1) um after this↓ ok (0.2)
- 7 S1: → قصده كل واحد يتكلم علي نفسه ولاه  
(does he mean everyone speaks upon himself or what)
- 8 S2: → لالا واحد بس يتكلم علي الكل  
(no no just one person speaks for the others)
- 9 T: so let's start from this group (.) ye:s  
10 can you stand up a:nd (0.2)  
11 tell us what are the key words they used to describe themselves

In extract 6.4 the class was going over the practice from the lesson on listening comprehension, in which students were asked first to listen to the recorded material picking up key words and then describing themselves using these words in the correct way. The focus of this extract is on lines 7 and 8 which represent another example of desk talk participation beyond the classroom discussion. The teacher's larger sequence from line 1 to 4 was about how students should organise their participation in this activity. He told each group to choose one student to describe the others after describing themselves in their groups. Lines 5 and 6 are a good example of a teacher's prompt for student responses, '*who will be that person because we will have a next activity after this*'. After the teacher's prompt for response there was a short pause in line 6 which was followed by S1's desk utterance in line 7 which initiated the desk talk by giving a specific invitation to S2 for explanation. S1 seemed to be unable to understand the teacher's request

because she asked S2 in line 7, '*does he mean everyone speaks upon himself or what?*'. S2 responded to S1's prompt with a double 'No' in line 8 and continued explaining the question because she recognised that S1 was unable to understand the teacher's request. In this case, she provided S1 with information on the teacher's request in line 8, telling her that it was about choosing one student from each group to speak about the others.

Furthermore, while S1 and S2 were speaking together about the ongoing classroom talk, the teacher continued with his sequence in lines 9-10. He nominated the first group for this activity, saying '*so let's start from this group*', and he specified one student to stand up and describe the others using the key words they had chosen, "*tell us what are the key words they used to describe themselves*".

From the above examples, desk turns prompted by students seem to be commonly used to give information, especially during such contexts of teacher-fronted activities where students are not provided with opportunities to orally participate. Students often resort to this type of talk to provide each other with missing information about ongoing classroom activities. They employ such desk utterances for understanding issues related to the classroom discussion. Furthermore, desk talk may also be used for other purposes such as for translation to find the literal meaning of a specific word or expression as can be shown in the following section.



### 3. 1. 2. Solicited desk talk for translation

Desk talk is also found behind classroom turn-taking for the purpose of translation. Students reply to specific invitations in the form of prompts asking for the meaning of words. Here students self-select with prompts followed by other students' responses for translation. Illustrative examples of this pattern from the data collected are provided below:

#### Extract 6.5 (27.55)

- 1 T: s:o (0.2) yes↑ (.) take a piece of paper↑=  
2 S1: =yes  
3 T: and write (.) these words (0:2) I'll give you an example for  
4 each vowel↓ oka:y and then we will correct them↓ together okay  
5 S1: → شينو  
(what)  
6 S2: → طلعي ورقة  
(take a piece of paper)

Extract 6.5 was also taken from the phonetics lesson about vowel sounds in which the teacher asked students to write down some words which included different examples of vowels, as in lines 1 to 4. In line 5, S1 self-selected to prompt a desk talk with S2 who was sitting beside her, to try to understand the teacher's words at the beginning of the above extract (6.5). S2 summarised the teacher's request in line 6 as a short answer, '*take a piece of paper*'.

The next example of desk talk participation for translation comes from the same activity of listening comprehension mentioned above. Students were asked first to listen to recorded material picking up key words and then to



constrained by the environments in which they occur; nor does it affect these environments. On the other hand, this side speech can also be categorised as unsolicited in which students self-select to provide their desk turns without prompts from others as seen in the following section.

### **3. 2. Unsolicited desk talk**

The desk talk participation described in the previous section can clearly be characterised as solicited by students and followed by other students' responses. These utterances occur beyond, but are often related to, the overall classroom discussion in the same way as in the traditional turn taking mechanisms in classroom interaction. However, desk talk occurring beyond the classroom teacher-student discussion may have different characteristics: it may also be unsolicited.

Unsolicited desk talk can be defined as self-selected initiations building on the prior talk in the classroom. These initiations relating to the surrounding discussion may help students to orient themselves to the direction of the ongoing interaction, and may be used by students for the purpose of making comments and expressing feelings or for creating jokes. Each of these patterns is illustrated below with examples, and the nature of the desk turns in each pattern is discussed.

#### **3. 2. 1. Unsolicited desk talk for providing comments**

Making comments using desk talk involves self-selected initiation. Rather than responding to a specific prompt, it arises from the surrounding prior talk.

Student initiations in this environment can be employed to express feelings such as different forms of suggestions, objections, and criticisms where students self-select to provide their turns following up the classroom discussion. This type of follow-up turn to make comments may occur after a teacher's and/or a student's utterance. While these desk turns do not affect the explicit classroom oral discussion because they occur completely separate from it, students often find that these desk turns are good opportunities to be used for participation. Students often orient to what is going on using desk talk to speak behind and/or after the current speaker, although they do not have the right to do so.

In extract 6.7 below, the classroom was involved with a textbook activity on vowels. The exercise was about identifying each sound, pronouncing it in the correct way, and giving a description of it according to its position in the IPA vowels chart drawn on the board, representing the oral cavity where vowels are produced. The extract begins as the S1 was pronouncing the vowel /aI/ as follows:

#### **Extract 6.7 (14.19)**

- 1 S1: it's /aI/
- 2 T: yes /aI/
- 3 S1: it's low (.) back (.) long (.) tense (.) and neutral
- 4 T: yes↓ it's lo:w↑ (.) b:ack↑ (.) long vowel↑(.)
- 5 S1: tense
- 6 T: yes the tongue is tense↑◦◦
- 7 S2: → هذا صوت سهل وواضح  
(this sound is clear and easy)
- 8 T: and the lips↑ a:re (.) neutral↑

In the above extract (6.7), S1 answered only one part of the teacher's question by pronouncing the vowel /aI/ in line 1. The teacher accepted the answer latching 'yes' to her utterance with repeating the vowel sound in line 2. Then, S1 provided a description of this vowel and the teacher continued to latch her turns with 'yes' followed by repetitions of the answers in lines 3-6. While this sequence of utterances was in progress between S1 and the teacher, S2 followed up their utterances providing comments as a desk talk to the student sitting next to her. S2 seemed to show that she could answer the question through her comment in line 7: *'this sound is clear and easy'*. It is clear that this comment in this extract was completely related to the teacher-student talk even though it was uttered to a desk partner beyond the classroom interaction.

In the next extract 6.8, the student's comment was also made beyond the teacher-student discussion in line 11, where S3 provided her opinion on the ongoing discussion to another student. This extract is taken from the same lesson on vowel sounds mentioned above which includes an example of desk talk:

### Extract 6.8 (25.00)

- 1 T: oka:y↑ (.) an example [for this one]  
2 Ss: [yes]  
3 T: who can give an example for this one (.)y:es please↓  
4 S1: cat  
5 Ss: cat  
6 T: path  
7 S1: cat  
8 T or cat  
9 Ss: cat  
10 T: y:es↑  
11 S3: → صار هما نفس الصوت

(so both of them are the same sound)

The teacher's prompt in line 1 invited students to give an example of a particular vowel sound. In this case, the classroom seemed to be under the teacher's control of turn taking. The teacher's prompt in line 1 was an invitation to bid where students would raise their hands to be called on (see, e.g. Mehan, 1979). By calling 'yes' in line 2 with their hands raised, the students indicated that they had oriented to the teacher's prompt as an invitation to bid. The teacher confirmed this by repeating his invitation to respond in line 3, but this time nominating a particular student, saying 'yes please'. In line 4, S1 answered by providing the word 'cat' which included the vowel /æ/. The repetition of this word by other students in line 5 indicates that the teacher did not understand S1's answer. The teacher's repetition of the answer in line 6 'Path' and in line 8 'or cat' was either evidence of the teacher's misunderstanding, or of the fact that he did not want to provide more than one example of this vowel. Also, S1's second repetition of the answer in

line 7 followed by other students in line 9 without invitation from the teacher is a confirmation of the same word 'caɪ'. Then, this answer was accepted in the teacher's turn, saying 'yes' in line 10. Following up this conversation between the teacher and students, S3 gave a comment as a desk turn in line 11 to make sure that both examples provided by the speaker and the teacher had the same vowel sound.

Another example of desk talk for making comments comes from the lesson on listening comprehension skills where students were asked to listen to the tape and pick up key words to describe themselves to their group. Then, the teacher asked the students to choose one student to describe their group members as shown in the following extract 6.9:

**Extract 6.9 (18.28)**

- |   |    |                                    |
|---|----|------------------------------------|
| 1 | S1 | [Amina is very eh                  |
| 2 | T  | okay where is Amina] (.) this one↓ |
| 3 | S1 | Sara Sara                          |
| 4 | T  | Sara okay=                         |
| 5 | S1 | =she is very kind person↓          |
| 6 | T  | ehe                                |
| 7 | S1 | and she is very quiet              |
| 8 | T  | kind and quiet↑ okay oo            |
| 9 | S2 | → ها ها مش ديمه                    |
- (not always ha ha)**

Extract 6.9 above gives a typical example of desk talk as a comment relating to the prior discussion in the classroom. S1 was chosen to describe the members of her group, and she started with Amina in line 1. Her turn was

incomplete because the teacher overlapped her in line 2 to identify which person Amina was. The teacher was pointing to a student in the same group when he was asking about Amina. After identifying the person being described in lines 1-4, S1 started her description in line 5: '*she is very kind person*'. Then, line 6 provided the teacher's prosodic marker '*ehe*' as a request for more detail. After S1 gave more detail in line 7, the teacher repeated the key words used for the description, ending with '*okay*' to mark it as acceptable in line 8, '*kind and quiet okay*'. In line 9, S2 self-selected to produce her objection to the description provided, in a desk utterance beyond the teacher-student turn-taking. S2's comment following up the teacher's repetition of the key words indicates that she did not agree with the description provided, saying '*not always ha ha*'. This example of desk talk is also relates completely to the ongoing classroom oral discussion.

A similar example of desk talk revealing an objection to the prior discussion is provided in extract 6.10. In this extract, S1 was chosen to describe students in her group. She started to describe the first person in her group as follows:

**Extract 6.10 (20.45)**

- 1 S1: Fatima is (.) um .hh. she bay um
- 2 she describes herself as a baby↑
- 3 T: um
- 4 S1: [she is um]
- 5 Ss: [laughter]
- 6 S2 :→ مش معقول فاطمه بيبي ها ها  
(Fatima is a baby, it's impossible ha ha)
- 7 S1: eh because she is kind-hearted↑ she is um (.) soft um (.)
- 8 also doesn't like↑ to hurt others



Here S1 in lines 1-2 said that her friend Fatima describes herself as a baby. The teacher produced the sound 'um' in line 3 as a request for the current speaker to continue. Then, S1 provided an incomplete utterance in line 4 because other students overlapped in the next turn. This overlapping represents laughter provided by most of the other students in line 5, which completed S1's incomplete utterance. This laughter indicates that most students seemed to mark this description of Fatima as unacceptable. Furthermore, the additional turn beyond this discussion in line 6, which clearly related to the ongoing talk, represented S2's comment of disagreement with the description, '*Fatima is a baby, it's impossible ha ha*'. While students express their doubts in different ways as explained above, S1 continued to provide more detail in lines 7 and 8 explaining why Fatima described herself as a baby.

In extract '6.11' below, S1 described another student 'Afaf' from the same group. The desk talk in this example came at the end of this extract, when S1 continued to describe her colleague in more detail:

### Extract 6.11 (23.06)

- 1 S1: Afaf eh em she's like em a sun eh set because she is e:h (0.5)  
2 T: sunset or what is it↑  
3 S1: sunset  
4 S2: sunset  
5 T: o:kay sunset (0.2)okay (0.2)  
6 S1: because eh she always a happy (.) or feel happy (.)  
7 with even a little eh bit things↑ and she eh she is always (.)  
8 a kind ↑ and likes to help eh  
9 S3: → صح هي ديمّا تضحك هذا أحسن وصف ليها  
(that's correct, she is always laughing, this is the best  
description for her)  
10 S1: others as eh as possible as she can

In line 1, S1 described Afaf as a sunset. When she started to explain why Afaf was a sunset in line 2, the teacher asked about the key word used to describe her, '*sunset or what is it*'. It seems that the teacher's prompt intended to keep the discussion going, because it came after a small pause. As a result, two students 'S1 and S2' immediately answered the teacher's question, repeating the same word '*sunset*' in lines 3 and 4. In line 5, the teacher followed their answers with his agreement, repeating the key word and ending his turn with '*okay*' as a signal to keep the floor open for S1 to provide more description. After a small pause, S1 started again to explain why Afaf was like a sunset as seen in line 6. As she continued giving the reason for this description in lines 8 and 10, S3 provided her comment to her desk partner beyond the ongoing discussion in line 9. In this case, S3 employed this type of talk (desk talk) to support the current speaker's talk. S3 confirmed to her desk partner that the description did actually apply to Afaf.

In the same time, while S1 was describing Afaf, another example of desk talk was captured from another student in a different area in the classroom. Her desk utterance behind the classroom discussion was as follows:

**Extract 6.12 (23.06)**

- 1 S1: Afaf eh em she's like em a sun eh set because she is e:h (0.5)  
2 T: sunset or what is it↑  
3 S1: sunset  
4 S2: sunset  
5 T: o:kay sunset (0.2)okay (0.2)  
6 S4: → واو مالقت ما تختار الا غروب الشمس  
(oh she doesn't find anything else to choose except the sunset)  
7 S1: because eh she always a happy (.) or feel happy (.)  
8 with even a little eh bit things↑ and she eh she is always (.)  
9 a kind ↑ and likes to help eh

Similar to the previous example where the classroom discussion was in-progress, S4 in this extract (6.12) provided in line 6 her comment on the word 'sunset' used for describing Afaf. Moreover, S4 employed her desk utterance to criticise the choice of Afaf being described as a sunset.

The next desk talk in extract 6.13 was also used for the purpose of criticism. This was taken from the lesson on listening comprehension mentioned above. In this activity, each group was asked to describe somebody who was well known to all of the students in the classroom but without saying their name. Then, the students in the other groups were asked to name that person while they listened to the key words used for description, as shown in the following extract 6.13.

### Extract 6.13 (57.04)

- 1 T: yes so you give me em you give the description (0.1)<sub>oo</sub>  
2 [and let's see how]  
3 S1: [shall I]  
4 T: the other groups can=  
5 S1: =shall I mention the shape first↑ or the um  
6 T: um start with the shape↑  
7 S1: em the shape is a whirlwind (.)  
8 T: u::m  
9 S1: um we chose the shape to describe Mr Alenton↑  
10 T: .hh. we're not supposed to say the name  
11 Ss: ((laughter))  
12 S2: → حيه الغبية قالت اسمه

**(oh, she said her name, what a stupid is she)**

In line 1, the teacher identified the student chosen by the first group to give the description in this activity. While the teacher was reminding the other groups about what they needed to do in this activity in lines 2 and 4, S1 overlapped the teacher's attempt to give an explanation by latching on to his utterances with a question in lines 3 and 5. The teacher accepted her overlapping in line 6 by saying '*um start with the shape*↑' as an immediate response to S1's question before the completion of her turn. In line 7, S1 started to talk about the person's shape, '*the shape is a whirlwind*'. Then, the teacher provided an extended prosodic marker to keep the speaker's talk going. This follow-up of the prosodic marker '*u::m*' comes in line 8. Then, in line 9 S1 made the mistake of naming of the person described, '*um we choose the shape to describe Mr Alenton*'. The teacher directly evaluated her turn as a mistake in line 10. His comment on this mistake was followed by laughter from the other groups in line 11. During the classroom laughter, S2

provided her comment on this situation in line 12 to the student sitting next to her. She used this type of self-selected desk utterance to criticise the current speaker (S1) for not understanding the requirements of the current activity, saying '*oh, she said her name, what a stupid is she*'. Describing S1 with the word '*stupid*', which could not have been used explicitly in the oral discussion, indicates that students may feel able to express themselves more freely in such desk talk participation.

Another example of desk talk for making comments concerns how this type of talk is used to produce suggestions. This example comes from the classroom exercise on identifying vowel sounds, pronouncing them correctly, and describing them according to the position in the oral cavity where they are produced. Extract 6.14 below came at the end of the exercise when the teacher was asking students if they had any questions:

**Extract 6.14 (44.40)**

- 1 T: do you have any questions↑ ◦ ◦
- 2 S1: → لو نسمعوهم علي شريط أحسن  
(it's better if we listen to them on a cassette)
- 3 Ss: no (0.3) ◦ ◦
- 4 S2: teacher↑
- 5 T: [no questions
- 6 S2: I want to ask you]
- 7 T yes↑
- 8 S2 um if there is any CD or cassette to listen to the um to the um
- 9 T you mean for these vowels↑
- 10 S2 yes↓

Once the exercise on vowel sounds had finished, the teacher produced his prompt, '*do you have any questions*' in line 1. With this prompt, the teacher opened the floor generally to any and/or all students' questions, especially those relating to the exercise that they had just completed. Most students in the classroom responded to the teacher's prompt with '*no*' in line 3. Furthermore, while the teacher-student turn taking was in progress, S1 provided her suggestion '*it's better if we listen to them on a cassette*' to her desk partner (S2) in line 2. In line 4, S2 subsequently called out to the teacher to make this suggestion, but he did not hear her call. The teacher's turn in line 5 '*no questions*' indicated that he was about to move on to a new exercise. Raising her voice, S2 overlapped the teacher again, saying '*I want to ask you*' in line 6. Then, the teacher gave another opportunity for discussion by opening the floor to S2 with '*yes*' in line 7, who provided her question about the activity they had just finished. The most interesting thing in this example is in line 8 in which S2 repeated the same question asked earlier by S1 in their desk talk beyond the teacher-student discussion; '*um if there is any CD or cassette to listen to the um to the um*'. Then, the teacher immediately asked another question in line 9 to make sure that the question referred to the vowel sounds practiced in the current activity, which was answered with '*yes*' in line 10.

As noted above, unsolicited desk talk can be seen as self-selected turn-taking to make specific comments relating to prior talk or to provide information which helps in understanding the ongoing interaction. Unsolicited desk talk for comments may also involve self-selected utterances following prior talk used

to express feelings about the surrounding discussion.

The following examples of desk utterances show such turn taking being exploited by students to express feelings and participate in the classroom interaction. Extract 6.15 below is taken from the lesson on speaking skills in which students were instructed to prepare a question for classroom discussion based either on what they had studied in their textbooks or on their previous knowledge. They were divided into groups where each group was told to ask their question which would lead to an open discussion and then they should give the correct answer. By asking them to create their own questions, the teacher here aimed to regulate the classroom discussion in order to ensure that most students would be involved in classroom talk and participate more deeply with what was going on. Extract '6.15' gives a typical example of desk talk used for expressing feelings about the teacher's clarification, as shown in line 6 by S1:

**Extract 6.15 (36.28)**

- 1 T: so yes (.) so in the in En:GLISH I mean if you see the
- 2 dictionaries they're always modernized (.) developed (.)↑
- 3 right↑ they're always developed↑
- 4 so (.) here↑ in English(.) e:m what they say is that eh(.)
- 5 it accepts about four thousand words a year↑ (0.7)
- 6 **S1: → four thousand (.) wow↑**
- 7 T: that's oxford dictionary

Line 6 in extract 6.15 above represents the student's words in the background of the classroom. It is clear that her comment '*four thousand wow*' was

actually related to the ongoing classroom discussion. With this expression in line 6, S1 conveys her feeling of surprise to the desk partner sitting next to her about the information given by the teacher on the large number of English words from foreign origins, where in lines 1-5 she was clarifying the development and modernisation of English words as an issue raised by students for discussion. The teacher continued her talk, giving an example as a reference to support her explanation, '*that's oxford dictionary*', in line 7.

The next example of desk talk for expressing feelings also came after the teacher's talk, when S1 self-selected to formulate her own turn-taking with her desk partner. This example is taken from the lesson on phonetics in which the classroom was reviewing vowel sounds. In this turn, the students were asked to come up to the board to place vowels in the IPA vowels chart after giving the correct pronunciation and description. Extract 6.16 below starts with the teacher's specific invitation to come up to the board as follows:

#### **Extract 6.16 (3.07)**

- 1        T:        can you put them on the board↑ yes so who can (.)
- 2                yes who did number one (.) who did vowel number one↑ (.)
- 3                can you come and put it on the board↑ (.)
- 4                um on th:e quadrilateral (0.3) just to show us um
- 5                the position of the vowel in the (.) quadrilateral
- 6        S1: → مانتحبش نطلع عالسيورة  
                   **(I don't like to come out on the board)**

In this example (extract 6.16), S1's comment to her desk partner in line 6 seems to be oriented to the teacher's prompt produced in lines 1-5 as an



expression of her feelings. In line 1, the teacher appeared to invite the student who provided the description of the vowel sound to put it on the board, but she refused to do so. The teacher seemed immediately to understand the students' reluctance, because in line 2 he repeated his request but this time changing his prompt as an invitation to bid telling the students '*yes who did number one (.) who did vowel number one<sup>↑</sup> (.)*'. Then, the teacher confirmed this in lines 3-5, nominating another student to come up to the board to place the transcribed vowel in its position. While the teacher's turns were in progress, S1 expressed implicitly her negative feelings in line 6 about the teacher's prompt, telling her desk partner sitting beside her that '*I don't like to come out on the board*'.

The next example (extract 6.17) is also taken from the same lesson in the same situation. In a different area of the classroom, another student conveyed her negative feelings as an implicit expression about the action of coming up to the board:

**Extract 6.17 (13.10)**

- 1 S1: it's /i:/
- 2 T: /i:/↑
- 3 S1: mid
- 4 T: mid↑
- 5 S1: central
- 6 T: central↑
- 7 S1: long
- 8 T: long↑
- 9 S1: tense
- 10 T: tense↑
- 11 S1: neutral
- 12 T: [a:nd neutral↑]
- 13 Ss: [neutral
- 14 T: the lips are (.) neutral when we (.) pronounce this vowel okay↓
- 15 oka::y (0.2) come out here please↓
- 16 S2 → الحمد لله ياربى مش انا  
(thanks God, it's not me)

In extract 6.17, while S1 was pronouncing and describing the vowel sound /a/, the teacher was repeating her answers one by one to maintain the sequence of turns in lines 1-14. In line 15, S1 was invited to come up to place the described vowel in its position on the board. When the teacher explicitly told S1 to come up to the board '*oka::y (0.2) come out here please↓*', S2 provided her expression to the desk partner sitting beside her in line 16. Within this desk turn, she actually expressed her negative attitude towards this activity because she thanked God for not being in her classmate's position, '*thanks God, it's not me*'.

Extract '6.18' below is also taken from the phonetics lesson on vowel sounds, and it represents another example of desk talk for expressing negative feelings about classroom activity:

### Extract 6.18 (27.40)

- 1 T: ok:ay (.) let me just (0:5) dictate some wo:rdz↑  
2 and I want you to write them in phonetic symbols oka:y  
3 S1: → أوه هذا صعب جدا مانحياش بكل  
(oh it's too difficult I don't like it at all)

In this extract (6.18), the teacher was moving on to the next activity on vowel sounds. After finishing the previous activity of vowel sound description, the teacher indicated in lines 1-2 that he would dictate certain words and students should write them down using phonetic symbols. The focus of this extract is on the desk turn produced by S1 in line 3: *'oh it's too difficult I don't like it at all'*. This desk turn to her neighbouring classmate was provided by S1 as a comment to express her feelings of dissatisfaction with the new activity. It occurred immediately after the teacher asked the students to give transcriptions of the words.

The following example of desk talk behind the ongoing classroom discussion was uttered by S1 while the class was listening to audio-recorded material in lines 1-5 of extract 6.19 below. In this example, students were going over the practice from the lesson on listening comprehension skills, in which they were asked first to listen to the recorded material, then to pick up key words and describe themselves using these words. While the recorded material was providing students with the features of the triangle shape, in line 6 S1 self-selected to express her feelings to the classmate sitting beside her. She wanted to indicate that she had the same characteristics as the triangle shape provided by audio recordings to describe people.

The final example of desk talk for giving comments comes from the same activity of listening to audio-recorded material, when students were asked to listen carefully to the recording to pick up words to describe themselves. In extract 6.19 below, while the recorder was supplying students with the description features in lines 1-6, this time using the circle shape, the desk talk comes at the end of the extract. S1 expressed her positive feelings towards the characteristics of this shape in line 7. By producing her desk utterance '*oh, she seems to know me very well*', S1 appeared to participate in the ongoing interaction. Her desk turn related to the audio material where she showed her agreement with being described as a circle person:

**Extract 6.19 (34.46)**

- |   |      |   |
|---|------|---|
| 1 | Rec. | the circle↑ (0.2) personal space and time to think (.)        |
| 2 |      | are very important to you↓ (0.1)                              |
| 3 |      | you are independent (.) and prefer to solve your              |
| 4 |      | own problems (.) than ask others for help (0.1)               |
| 5 |      | you are confident (.) and calm (.)                            |
| 6 |      | you do not like to be in crowds (0.1)                         |
| 7 | S1 → | واو كأنها تعرفني كويس<br>(oh, she seems to know me very well) |

Unsolicited desk turns can be clearly seen as self-selected turns for providing comments built on the prior talk and to cope with surrounding discussion. This type of turns is utilized by students to participate implicitly and more freely in classroom activities. However, unsolicited desk talk is also found to be employed by students to make jokes, as shown in the following section.

### 3. 2. 2. Unsolicited desk talk for making jokes

Unsolicited desk talk participation was also found in this study in the form of self-selected turns taken by students from time to time to make jokes about the classroom discussion. As can be seen below, such turns are based on the classroom activities where students provide amusing comments to appeal to other students. In the cases described below, some students appear to display participation not in the wider oral discussion, but instead in utterances to their desk partners. The next example is taken from the phonetics lesson in which the class was reviewing the pronunciation and description of vowel sounds. In extract 6.20 below, S2 self-selected to provide her desk partner with a joke while the teacher-student discussion was in progress:

#### Extract 6.20 (15.09)

- 1 T: yes (0.1) y:es please↑
- 2 S1: /ə /
- 3 T: yes (.) /ə / or we call it a::=
- 4 Ss: =schwa
- 5 T: schwa yes this is th::e (.)
- 6 Ss: schwa
- 7 T: only English vowel↑ that has↑ a name (.)
- 8 Ss: [[name]]
- 9 T: so this is the (.) schwa vowel↑ okay
- 10 S2: → أه شوا هذا أحسن شئ

**(oh barbecue, this is the best thing)**

In line 1, the teacher selected S1 as the next speaker to pronounce and describe a sound. S1 provided the pronunciation of the vowel in line 2, and the teacher marked her answer as acceptable in line 3, saying 'yes (.) /ə/'. At the same time, the teacher's turn in line 3 was by designing an incomplete

utterance, intended to prompt a completion of his turn. Such incomplete utterances are often accompanied by indicators such as pauses and prosodic markers (Koshik, 2002, p. 287). Koshik argues that this type of utterances is used to extend utterances or conduct actions to elicit knowledge from students that is already known by the teacher (p. 288). In this case, the teacher employed a sound stretch on the last syllable (a::) to mark his turn as a designedly incomplete utterance. This represented the teacher's general invitation to reply, indicating that any or all students may respond simultaneously. The answer "schwa" in the next line came from several students as a completion of the teacher's incomplete utterance, because he had not identified any specific student for the next turn. Then, the teacher marked their answer as acceptable in line 5 and again provided a turn with a deliberately or designedly incomplete utterance using the sound stretch on the last syllable (th::e) in order to elicit an extension of his utterance. Despite students repeating the same answer "schwa" in line 6 as a completion of the teacher's utterance, his own completion in line 7 '*only English vowel↑ that has↑ a name (.)*' marked his intention as an attempt to elicit different information. The additional students' turn in line 8 was delivered as a choral reply. Then, the teacher concluded by repeating the answer (schwa) and confirming its correctness with 'okay' in line 9 before moving on. After the teacher's explicit attempt to move on to the next vowel sound, S2 used her self-selected desk turn to make a joke, talking to her desk partner in line 10. Her intention in this turn (*oh barbecue, this is the best thing*) was an attempt to make a joke because (schwa) in Arabic means to cook meat on a barbecue.

The next example of desk talk for making jokes is captured from another class. In this lesson, students were carefully listening to the tape-recording which described people, and they were asked to take notes and select words to describe themselves. The main purpose of this activity was to give an opportunity for oral discussion in the classroom. After each student was giving about one minute to describe her/himself to the others, each group was required to select one person to describe everybody in their group. Thus, S1 in extract 6.21 below was selected to describe her group:

**Extract 6.21 (16.14)**

- 1        S1:    last we have my eh classmate or my friend Khadijah↑ (.)
- 2            eu she describes herself as the sea↑ (0.2) um as we all know
- 3            she's very calm (.) she's very quiet↑ um she never speaks
- 4            loudly (.) um she she's just whispering (.) um so I don't hear↑
- 5            that you are just unlike me (.) .hh. you are the opposite
- 6        S2: → هي ترتاره ما تسكتش بكل  
               **(she is a talkative and doesn't stop talking)**
- 7        S1:    em (0.2) she describes him eh herself (.) you know↑ (.)
- 8            you can say that I'm talkative (.)
- 9        Ss:    [[laughter]]

In lines 1-4, S1 described her classmate Khadijah as a very calm and quiet person. Then, she mentioned that her colleague was the opposite of her, in line 5. S2 self-selected to follow up this turn, saying '*she is a talkative and doesn't stop talking*' as a desk utterance in line 6 used to make a joke. Although her desk turn beyond the classroom discussion was unheard by the other students, S1 repeated the same word "talkative" in line 8 to describe herself as a person different from her classmate Khadijah. After describing herself as talkative, all of the students follow up her turn with laughter.

In the same previous situation described above, a different desk talk was captured at the same time but in a different area of the classroom while S1 was describing her group mate Khadijah. Extract 6.22 below shows this desk talk beyond the classroom activity as follows:

**Extract 6.22 (15.14)**

- 1        S1:    last we have my eh classmate or my friend Khadijah↑ (.)
- 2            eu she describes herself as the sea↑ (0.2) um as we all know
- 3            she's very calm (.) she's very quiet↑ um she never speaks
- 4            loudly (.) um she she's just whispering (.) um so I don't hear↑
- 5            th that you are just unlike me (.) .hh. you are the opposite
- 6        S3: → هاها ترتاره  
               **(ha ha talkative)**
- 7        S1:    em (0.2) she describes him eh herself (.) you know↑ (.)
- 8            you can say that I'm talkative (.)
- 9        S4: → هاها هي بروحها قالتها  
               **(ha ha she said that on herself)**
- 10       Ss:    [[laughter]]

After describing her group mate Khadijah as a very calm and quiet person in lines 1 to 5, S1 mentioned that she herself was the opposite of this. As a result, a desk utterance at the arrow in line 6 was immediately provided by S3 in making a joke. She self-selected to follow up S1's description with '*ha ha talkative*'. Although this desk turn beyond the classroom discussion was apparently unheard by speaker 'S1', she repeated the same word "talkative" in line 8 to describe herself. After describing herself as talkative, S1's explicit turn was followed by S4's response to her desk partner in line 9. In this desk turn, S4 seemed to provide her desk partner (S3) with evidence which confirmed her initiation of the desk talk in line 6. She wanted to say that S1's



own admission of being talkative was a confirmation of her desk partner's words.

As provided in examples above, unsolicited desk talk participation was also found in the form of self-selected turns taken by students from time to time to make jokes about the classroom discussion. Such turns are based on the classroom activities where students are led by the teacher. They appear to display participation not in the wider oral discussion, but instead in utterances to their desk partners.

#### **4. Summary**

The chapter has examined another way students in EFL classrooms used to participate in the ongoing activities. This alternative way in which participants become participated is to employ utterances relevant to the surrounding conversation in a desk talk. Desk turns prompted by students here seemed to be used for participating in ongoing discussion, especially during such contexts of teacher-fronted activities and where students are not provided with enough opportunities for oral participation.

From the data analysis, it becomes apparent that speaking for participation in the classroom involves much more than just explicit oral utterances. Students were demonstrating oral utterances to follow what was going on through implicit talk on their desks. As for explicit oral participation, desk talk can be regarded as a way of participating in the classroom activities because findings show that it is actually related to ongoing discussion. Students show that they rely on desk talk for developing their understanding of discussed topics. As revealed in the analysis provided above, this type of talk seems to be preferred when students lack opportunities for participating in the plenary interaction. They were not only participating by using such type of talk, but were also constructing a kind of understanding through the distribution of information between themselves. In addition to distributing information to each other through desk talk, they were providing information, making translations, giving comments, and making jokes when they wanted to understand classroom discussion. In this chapter, desk talk is described as a way of student participation organised by participants beyond teacher-student talk to

compensate on their lack of participating in ongoing talk.

Desk talk in the classroom seems to be organised as in everyday conversations. Participants take turns in this type of talk without pre-set agenda for the talk. They are often self-selection to participate in desk talk. However, desk talk in the classroom is different from everyday conversation in which participants orient to the ongoing interaction in terms of both purpose and sequential organisation. The analysis of data in this chapter shows that students resort to desk talk from time to time to maintain reciprocity.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **DISCUSSION**

As mentioned in chapter one, the present study set out to describe the organisation of student participation in EFL classrooms. In this chapter the key findings obtained from the data analysis in empirical chapters (5 and 6) are discussed with possible explanations for them in relation to the research questions posed in the study and the existing literature. This chapter is organised into two main sections. Section one discusses the key features of embodied action as used by students for classroom participation. However, second section is devoted to discussing desk talk as a way of student participation occurs beyond teacher-student talk.

## **1. Introduction**

From the data analysis in chapter five and six, it becomes apparent that student participation involves much more than just speaking. Students were demonstrating similar and various movements to follow what was going on through different types of embodied actions. They were not only participating by speaking, but were also constructing a kind of group participation through the distribution of signals between themselves. They were gazing, smiling, nodding heads, glancing at each other, and orienting to the teacher when they wanted to participate in the classroom discussion. In addition to embodied action, desk talk was also used by students as a specific way for classroom participation while turns-at-talk are in progress. Students resorted to desk talk to compensate for the lack of opportunity for participating orally in whole class. The data analysis shows that this type of talk behind the scenes relates to ongoing discussion in the classroom and plays a significant role in students' understanding and following the ongoing interaction.

The analysis of embodied action revealed the 'intersubjectivity' in which participants understand each other through orienting and displaying their cognitive states, utterances and actions. Data analysis showed that participants display their orientation to each other and to their teacher for understanding the surrounding utterances. This is achieved by the use of non-verbal interactional resources employed within ongoing talk. These interactional resources of embodied action showed how participation was constructed. For more explanation, the findings obtained from the chapter of embodied action are discussed below in the following section.

## **2. Discussions on Embodied Action Participation**

Based on the analysis of embodied action, the present section is devoted to discuss the findings obtained from chapter five. The section extends existing knowledge of embodied action as used by students for classroom participation. Although the oral participation can be considered the main basic indicator of student participation, data analysis shows that many students chose to participate nonverbally during classroom activities. The findings obtained from chapter five can be used to explain in detail how students are participated in classroom discussion through non-verbal participation.

The possibility of oral utterance, however, does not necessarily mean that all of the students have a full opportunity to establish their participation. Their participation might not be taken into account or might be ignored if they all simultaneously took advantage of the opportunity to establish oral participation. As Hammersley (1990) indicates that teacher's questions may create the problem of making students compete to answer at the same time, especially in teacher-fronted classes (p. 16). In this way, the teacher may consider individual students for displaying participation rather than the collective groups. This can be seen in extract 7.1 below, in which the teacher gave an open opportunity to all students to answer her question:

### Extract 7.1 (Reading skills)

- 1 Teacher: wh:y does a woman wear↑  
2 the ring in the right↑ (.) em  
3 before marriage and then in  
4 the left when she gets married=  
5 Student: =[but it's\*\*]  
6 Students: → (([speak together in group]))  
7 Teacher: sshh  
8 Student: but in eh other countries it is  
9 the opposite (.) em

Extract 7.1 shows the way in which the students answered the teacher's question. This example of the use of oral utterances by all of the students when an opportunity was available to be engaged in the ongoing discussion shows that it was not valid for whole class participation, and no further response was made by the teacher. This is because nobody could understand what the others were saying. In this above example, the teacher did not select a speaker when she asked her question in lines 1 to 4. In line 5, one student tried immediately to hold the floor by linking her utterance to the teacher's turn. This speaker's utterance was directly overlapped in line 6 by all of the students who were also trying to participate orally. They appeared to compete for providing answers, seeking the teacher's attention. The result was that the teacher ignored their oral participation, saying "ssh" in line 7 to stop their verbal utterances. When they stopped their utterances, the floor seemed to be given to the first speaker who had been overlapped in line 6 and who then provided the answer in lines 8 and 9. Furthermore, the students' simultaneous oral participation can be seen clearly in the following picture 7.1:



**Picture 7.1 (23.38)**

This image was captured at the time of the arrow in the above extract (7.1). It shows how the students were speaking at the same time while some of them were also using their hands in trying to take the floor because they had been given an open opportunity to talk. In this case, the teacher has realised that students understand nothing until they stop talking and give the floor to only one student as explained above in extract 7.1.

From this example it is clear that when students are given open opportunity to speak, answer questions or comment on their responses, they sometimes speak and give answers as a group at the same time. In this case, all their oral utterances might be ignored by the teacher, with the floor instead given to only one student to speak. The findings in this chapter suggest that, in order to avoid being ignored, students resort to embodied actions so as to be participated in the ongoing talk. They provide meaningful gazes and movements in order to follow the ongoing activity and retain the attention of the teacher. It can therefore be stressed that not only oral utterances



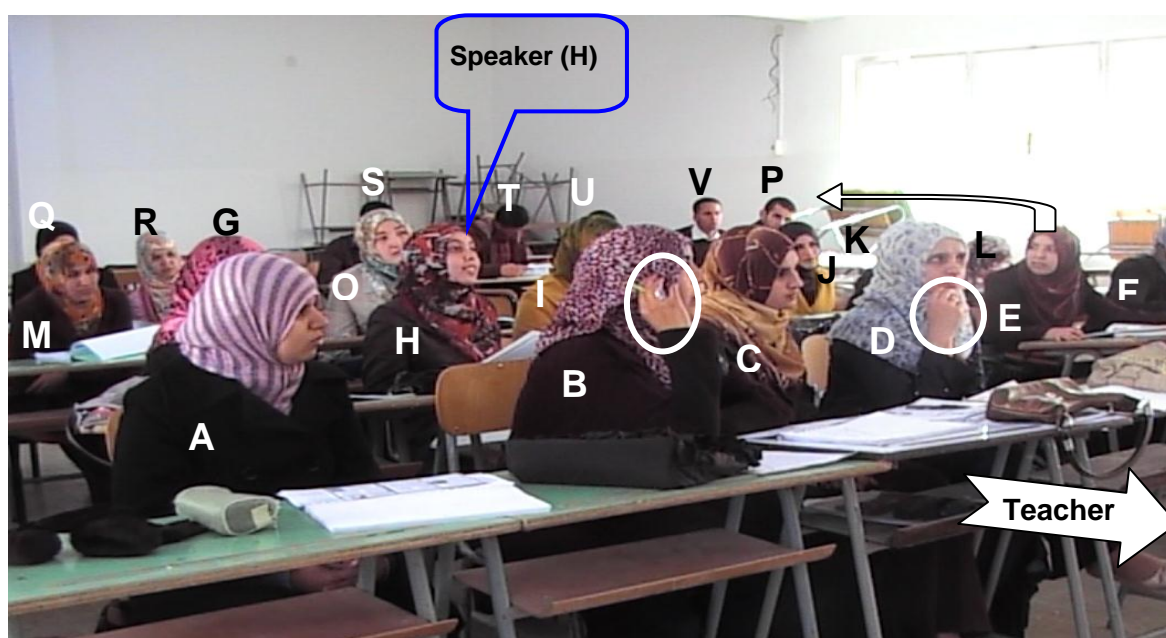
represent classroom participation. Embodied actions also help students to be fully participated in and become involved in the ongoing activities. Such embodied actions might not be understood unless they are established in relation to turn-taking in progress. This can be seen in extract 7.2 below, which shows strong relationship between the speaker's turn-taking and the accompanying embodied actions. The speaker (**H**) in this example makes further utterances after receiving meaningful signals from the rest of the class. In this way, such embodiments enable students to be fully involved in the ongoing conversation:

### Extract 7.2 (Reading skills)

- |   |          |  |
|---|----------|--|
| 1 | H:       | why the young men drive fast↑ (0. 3) why the young men drive           |
| 2 |          | fast ↓ when you take that (.) the young men like to drive fast         |
| 3 | Teacher: | it's ok (.) why↑ do you think↑ (0. 2) young men↑ (0. 2)                |
| 4 | H:       | like to drive fast   |
| 5 | Teacher: | like to dive↑ fast   |
| 6 | H:       | = <u>drive</u> drive↑ fast   |
| 7 | Teacher: | =drive fast (0. 2) oh <u>drive</u> fast↑(.) why do you think (.) young |
| 8 |          | men (.) like to drive: (.) fast↑ (0. 3) why do you think↓ the young    |
| 9 |          | men like to**↓   |

The features of this extract (7.2) clearly mirror the importance of the participation embodiments adopted by students in the ongoing discussion. Their movements guided the conversation in a specific way. In lines 1 and 2 the speaker (**H**) repeated her question several times even though nobody asked her to do so. She recognised from the gazes and glances around her that most of the class, and even the teacher, did not understand her question.

The production of a wrong word by the teacher in line 5, 'dive', is very good evidence of the teacher's misunderstanding. Also, the repetition of the question twice more by the teacher in lines 7 and 8 without modifying it or adding new information is further evidence of the difficulty in understanding. The students did not say anything, but the teacher knew from their gazes that the speaker's turn did not make sense. The students' participation here using embodiments instead of verbal utterances can be clearly seen in the following picture 7.2:



**Picture 7.2 (21.45)**

Contrary to the situation in image 7.1 above, the students here did not produce any verbal utterances to participate. This picture, taken at the time of the arrow in the above extract 7.2, shows that the speaker (**H**) raised her head sharply towards the teacher when the latter spoke trying to make sense of her words. The students were either gazing towards the current speaker trying in

understanding her question or they were gazing towards the teacher waiting for repetition or more explanation. They also provided other movements with serious facial expressions. For example, student **E** turned her head and gazed sharply towards the speaker (**H**). **M**, **Q** and **R**, who were seated in the background, were also gazing straight ahead towards **H**. However, most of students looked at the teacher with questioning gazes waiting for her to comment. This explains why the question was repeated five times by speaker (**H**) and the teacher.

The above examples show that the use of oral utterances for participation by the entire class at the same time might result in not being understood. Utterances might be ignored if they are not produced separately. However, producing embodied actions can help all of the students together to be engaged at the same time and to become fully involved in the ongoing discussion.

Chapter five has described how student participation is organised during the ongoing activity and classroom discussion. The findings reveal that students employ various different types of embodied actions during turn-taking in progress. They produce various patterns of gazing, head-nodding, hand-raising, facial expressions, and other behaviours to compensate to oral participation. From the examples analysed above in chapter five, embodiments used for participating in classroom discussion were classified into two different groups. First, students provide embodied actions as various movements to participate in classroom discussion. Second, students produce

similar movements to be participated in the ongoing tasks. In both cases, students utilize such types of participation to cope with the surrounding talk. Both groups of the embodied actions were adopted by students for different purposes. For example, students used different patterns of gaze to express understanding or to follow the ongoing talk, facial expressions and head nodding for agreement/disagreement, hand-raising to take the floor, and making small groups for discussion. Moreover, the examples provided in chapter five are part of a larger set of data showing how students in classroom settings establish patterns of participation embodiments to be participated in oral discussion.

## **2. 1. Embodied action and classroom discussion**

With regard to the interactional social practice carried out in the provided examples, the findings show that there is an intimate relationship between student movements and the ongoing talk in the classroom. These embodied actions closely relate to the surrounding talk, and both of them are essentially needed to understand the entire classroom participation. Therefore, the combination of speech and nonverbal behaviour is considered as a situation of social interaction, supporting the learning process or pedagogy. This means that student participation should be considered as social situations rather than as implications of a particular pedagogical theory or method (see e.g., Seedhouse, 1997; Evaldsson et al., 2001; Firth and Wagner, 2007). In this respect, the findings reveal that student participation relates to classroom interaction and also highlights issues that are of a practical concern.

The coordination of turn-taking and embodied action has been dealt with from different perspectives. For example, Olsher (2004) considered embodied action as a completion of non-native speakers' turns. Other studies (see, e.g. Goodwin, 1981; Heath, 1986; Kidwell, 1997) have also analysed how speakers construct their turn-taking to establish reciprocity with co-participants. From analysing data in this study, however, the embodied action is only considered when turn-taking is in-progress. The focus is mainly on how students organise their participation by means of body movements within ongoing conversation.

Moreover, previous studies of talk coordinated with embodiments have often focused on the openings and closings of turns rather than on the role of embodiment while turn-taking is in progress (see e.g., Mortensen, 2008, Cekaite, 2008). Such studies clarified several aspects of turn-taking, including the way sequences are initiated, how the turn-taking system is managed, and the role of non-verbal action in initiating or terminating encounters. The present research, however, considers as substitutes for how embodiments are organised instead of oral turns to participate in the classroom. To the author's knowledge, no previous study has explained how embodied actions are used in this way and how they represent student participation when turn-taking is in progress, especially in such contexts as large EFL classes. It is shown here how participants exhibit these embodied actions during the progress of turn-at-talk in classroom interaction, where bodily orientation among participants is also necessary for talk to continue (Carroll, 2005a; Goodwin and Goodwin, 2005; Goodwin, 2006; Mondada, 2007). These

findings therefore illustrate the role that embodiments play in accomplishing whole class participation not just within the boundaries of the turn itself but also during turns-at-talk.

## **2. 2. Embodied action and pedagogical implications**

With regard to pedagogical implications, the organization of activities and the teacher's instructions provide students with different types of classroom participation. When classroom activities are led by the teacher without sufficient opportunity for oral participation, all of the students can nevertheless display their visible participation through different patterns of embodiment. However, when the classroom activity is organised in order to provide open opportunities for oral participation, students often speak together at the same time so as to be engaged in the ongoing task. Therefore, EFL teachers should be aware that their instructions are very important in providing students with suitable opportunities to organise their classroom participation.

Oral opportunities given by teachers often appear to lead classroom discussion. They seem to specify the participation roles by selecting speakers and organising the activities of the relevant next-action. In this way, teachers try to employ turn-allocation strategy for maintaining order in the classroom and to guarantee equal participation. Paoletti and Fele (2004) found that, although teachers' control over turn taking leads to constraining student participation (p. 78). However, the findings show that teachers cannot actually control non-verbal engagements. This is left to the students, who organise their own movements collectively as a group, which seems to be in a similar

way of selecting the next speaker (Lerner, 1993; Sahlström, 2002). Therefore, students resort to embodied actions to organise their own participation especially when the class is led by the teacher. These embodiments are not only relevant to students to participate in their classroom discussion, but also needed to make a kind of collaborative group participation. Therefore, teachers should be aware of such kind of participation by regarding it as part of their pedagogical objectives.

### **2. 3. Embodied action and reciprocity**

With regard to reciprocity, the findings show that students use movements as resources to request and establish reciprocity with the current speaker as well as with each other. They produce various and similar movements to display their understanding and following the speaker's talk. By establishing reciprocity during ongoing talk, the students move into an engagement framework out of which turns are built up. In accordance with those of studies conducted by Carroll (2004), Goodwin (1981), Heath (1984) and Kidwell (1997), the findings reveal that the teacher or the current speaker constitutes a relevant focus of attention with co-participants and their turns are basically produced with the displayed reciprocity. It was found that students' motivation to listen is very high because opportunities for taking the next turn in the plenary classroom discussion are not enough. As shown in extract 7.1 above, students' reciprocity with embodied action is much relevant compared to being speakers altogether at the same time. Moreover, in terms of speaking patterns, speakers have to provide their turns to addressing a large number of recipients as in the plenary classroom interaction. Therefore, the opportunities

for reciprocity that students often rely on to understand the ongoing conversation may increase using various and similar embodied actions.

#### **2. 4. Embodied action and intersubjectivity**

With regard to 'intersubjectivity' in which participants understand each other through orienting and displaying their cognitive states, utterances and actions (Seedhouse 2004), the findings show students' use of embodied action as a mechanism for ensuring that socially distributed cognition occurred, allowing participants to check that their understanding is indeed shared by interlocutors. This reveals that participants display their orientation to each other and to the teacher in order to understand classroom discussion. This is achieved by the use of non-verbal interactional resources employed within ongoing talk. These interactional resources of embodied action such as gazing and head nodding show how student participation is constructed. Students collaboratively create their embodied actions and display their orientation to different types of interactional organisation embedded within talk-in-interaction. Each action conveys the students' understanding of the turns-at-talk, which at the same time provides the relevant context for these actions. This feature also reveals the 'interconnectedness' in which turns and actions are not randomly produced, but are linked to each other by their action content, building coherent and meaningful interaction (Schegloff, 2007, pp. 1-12; see also Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, pp. 38-39).

Similarly, Seedhouse (2004) finds that participants display their orientation not only to each other, but also to the rest of the class and to the analyst in order



to understanding their utterances (p. 239). Therefore, instead of analysing the interactional resources alone such as turn-taking, sequence, and repair, they were associated with different signals of embodied action such as gazing and head nodding. In this way, participants display their understanding of the interaction from different perspectives. Their understanding is analysed not just in relation to their utterances, but also in relation to their embodied action.

### **3. Discussions on Desk Talk Participation**

From the findings obtained from chapter six, desk talk can be looked at from various different angles. These findings are briefly discussed below in relation to the existing literature.

#### **3. 1. Desk talk and classroom discussion**

With regard to conversational mechanisms, it was found that the turn taking organisation of desk talk seems to be in some ways similar to that which occurs in the explicit plenary classroom discussion. That is, desk talk basically uses a kind of interactional organisation in which participants orientate themselves in turn-taking patterns. Similarly, as Seedhouse (2004, 2005) confirms, turn-taking organisation is constrained by and related to the goals of classroom interaction (see also Markee, 2000), and it was also found in the current study that participants' turn-taking in desk talk is constrained and mainly related to the ongoing activities in classroom interaction. These desk turn-taking patterns were often found to have the interactional organisation of 'adjacency pairs', which is similar to the turn-taking organisation in classroom interaction described by Seedhouse (2004, 2005). In these adjacency pairs,

either both parts are provided or the second part may not be produced or may be delayed. Also, desk turn-taking was found to involve self-selection, where a student initiated an action and their desk partner responded. This sequential pattern is similar to that found by Bellack et al (1966) in terms of 'soliciting', where the teacher initiates an action, and the students respond after which the teacher evaluates the response. This format then later become known as 'IRF' in Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), 'IRE' in Mehan (1979) or question-answer-comment sequences in Markee (2000). Similarly, it was found here that desk talk largely followed this general pattern of classroom interaction where the next-speaker would self select to participate (Lerner, 2003). Desk turn-talking was found to be like solicitation, where one student responded to their desk partner who had initiated an action; or as non-solicitation where they themselves self-selected to initiate utterances without prompts to do so. In both cases, students were not formally allowed to speak, but they used such types of desk talk to cope with the surrounding atmosphere. As opposed to the general patterns in classroom interaction, however, it was found in the current study that desk turn-taking occurred unexpectedly, because students themselves controlled the initiation of their turns while classroom discussion was in progress. It was also found that most of the turns of desk talk were short and their length was approximately equal.

### **3. 2. Desk talk and participation**

With regard to the organisation of desk talk in relation to the way students engaged and participated, this study has found that in desk talk by both self-nomination and nomination by the others, adjacency pairs in the form of

solicited and unsolicited patterns plays a major part in helping students become more involved in the ongoing talk. That is, the use of solicited desk talk taken the form of question-answer pairs are produced for clarification, translation and giving more information in order to follow the ongoing conversation. However, unsolicited desk talk taken the form of single turns is provided for giving comments, expressing feelings and making jokes. Therefore, the findings of the present study revealed that desk talk can lead students to cope with the ongoing interaction and in this way they can be able to sustain their participation. These findings are to some way in contrast with Sahlström's (1999) findings that students "displayed non-participation while talking at one's desk" (p. 91).

### **3. 3. Desk talk and reciprocity**

With regard to the reciprocity, the findings of this study are in accordance with those of the study conducted by Sahlström (1999). It was found that the relationship between speaking and listening works in the same manner as explained by Sacks, et al. (1974), because in desk talk students may several times take the roles of both speaker and/or recipient. In this way, students' motivation to listen is very high because there are enough opportunities and less competition for taking the next turn than in the plenary classroom discussion. It was found that for the individual student reciprocity in desk talk is much easier compared to being a collective recipient among a large number of students. The listener in the latter type of talk has a greater responsibility to respond when he is addressed as a recipient. Conversely, in terms of speaking patterns in desk talk, speakers have to provide their turns

to only one or two students rather than addressing a large number of recipients as in the plenary classroom interaction. Therefore, the opportunities for reciprocity that students often rely on to understand the ongoing conversation may increase in desk talk.

### **3. 4. Desk talk and pedagogical implications**

With regard to pedagogical implications, it was found that the organisation of desk talk provides students with various different types of classroom participation. The current study reveals that desk talk appears to be associated with the pedagogical aims of the lesson, and when they change, the turn-taking in this type of talk changes accordingly. This type of talk is therefore similar to that found in Seedhouse's (2004) study of plenary classroom interaction, in which he argued that turn-taking is organised differently depending on the pedagogical activities.

### **3. 5. Desk talk and language use**

The final finding that can be highlighted from the desk talk in this study concerns the use of L1. It was found that L1 was used virtually in most of the turn-taking patterns in desk talk. Although English was often used as the medium of interaction in the classroom, most utterances produced in desk talk were spoken in Arabic. This may be because of the unique nature of the desk talk setting. That is to say, such talk behind the scenes between students who are equivalent in status is probably used more freely than that between a teacher and a student where there is a power differential. Another reason for students to use L1 is that desk talk may be employed at any time and only by

or between one or two students in trying to understand or respond the ongoing classroom activity. They use their mother tongue to simplify the target language and to create a kind of social interaction. In fact, this is different from the plenary classroom interaction where only the target language may be used. In the explicit classroom talk there is thus a limited possibility of L1 use which generally relates to the current classroom activity. This indicates that students resort to their L1 to produce desk talk to simplify the ongoing talk and to create the kind of social interaction described by Cook (2001). Here, in foreign/second language classrooms, the L1 can be used to explain difficult grammar, clarify new vocabulary, and manage the classroom. Cook further argues that there is no evidence that this use of L1 in foreign/second classrooms is inappropriate.

#### **4. Summary**

In summary, since EFL classes are often built on teacher-fronted activities, adequate opportunities for oral participation are not available for all students during classroom discussion. As a result, students produce a range of visible movements to contribute in other ways to the classroom interaction. These embodiments used during classroom oral discussion are mainly relating to the progression of speaker's turns. In fact, participants do not keep the same movement for different turns at talk. Rather, several movements are shown according to responses to the ongoing talk. Students resort to this type of participation to compensate for their lack of oral opportunities. They try to orientate themselves to what is around them and, thus, the more the class is led by the teacher, the more embodied action participants students become.

Further study in the field of interactional embodiment might focus on how teachers in EFL classrooms employ embodied action when they provide students with instructions. It would then be possible to clarify the relationship between embodied actions adopted by teachers and those displayed by students. It would also be possible to discover teachers' perspectives on the use of embodied actions by students and how they deal with such types of social interaction.

The findings of this study concerning several aspects of desk talk have also revealed both similarities and differences with the results of previous studies. Furthermore, existing research into classroom participation has not looked at how desk talk is used by students to participate. By investigating the natural

occurrence of desk talk in this study, the characteristics of this phenomenon have been clarified, which deepens our understanding of its relationship to general classroom participation. The original findings of the current research on desk talk include how the use of such talk, especially in teacher-fronted classes, provides students with the opportunities to compensate for their lack of explicit oral participation, to understand ongoing activity, to increase reciprocity, and to cope more freely with the ongoing discussion where there is no issue of power or status as in teacher-student interactions.

In addition, other studies are needed for further investigation of desk talk in EFL classrooms. Since the teachers' perspectives on desk talk were not examined in this study owing to time limitations, other researchers might focus on how EFL teachers deal with this phenomenon during their classroom activities.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this final chapter, a brief summary of the main areas covered in this thesis and the findings of the research is presented. The main conclusions and implications of the empirical part of this study are described. First, the research project and the achievements of the study are summarised. Then, brief answers to the research questions as dealt with in this thesis are discussed. Next, the pedagogical implications of the findings are considered, and finally the contributions of the study and suggestions for further research are provided.



## **1. The Research Project and its Achievements**

As mentioned in chapter one, the present study attempted to contribute to the existing knowledge about EFL classroom participation in general, and specifically to describe the role that other types of student participation play in the constitution of classroom participation.

The title of the current study is “Participation as a Complex Phenomenon in the EFL Classroom”. The types of student participation analysed and discussed here are not just any type of participation. Rather, these types of participation represent student engagements as found in the EFL classrooms of Libyan universities. The complexity of classroom participation in this context of EFL classrooms has been examined. Two different modes of student participation relating to the ongoing discussions in EFL classroom activities were found: embodied action and desk talk.

Both of these modes, as discussed in the data analysis presented in detail in chapters 5 and 6, contributed to the overall patterns of classroom participation. Various types of conversational mechanisms, such as turn-taking organisation, adjacency pairs, sequence types and references were taken into account in analysing each mode of participation. The analysis in this study was based on CA methodology to investigate such hybrid objects because it was argued that the analytical approach should not isolate language from its environment which includes physical surroundings, activities, and sequential actions (Goodwin, 2000a). Thus, the analysis of data in this study included a combination of talk and the use of the body in the

classroom context.

A general conclusion obtained from the analysis of classroom interaction as talk accompanied by embodiment is that students participate in ongoing activities using embodied actions. They were not only orally participating but were also non-orally constructing a kind of plenary engagement through the distribution of meaningful signals. In addition to speaking to participate, they were gazing, smiling, nodding heads and glancing at each other when involved in discussions in the classroom. However, a second way organised by students themselves to participate involves student-student talk (desk talk) that occurred beyond the scope of the teacher's and students' talk. Therefore, the results obtained in this study provide evidence of the extent to which such embodied actions and desk talk are exploited, especially by EFL learners, to participate in their classrooms.

## **2. Research Questions**

The present study was guided by the assumption that student participation may involve more than the production of explicit verbal engagement in the classroom. The research has attempted to extend existing knowledge about student participation by describing what is actually going on in classroom discussion. On the basis of this line of research which aims to uncover the organisation of student participation in EFL classrooms where activities are often teacher-led, this study highlighted the organisation of student participation, concerning modes of classroom participation. Also, on the basis of CA is a data driven, it was necessary to look at every aspect of the data

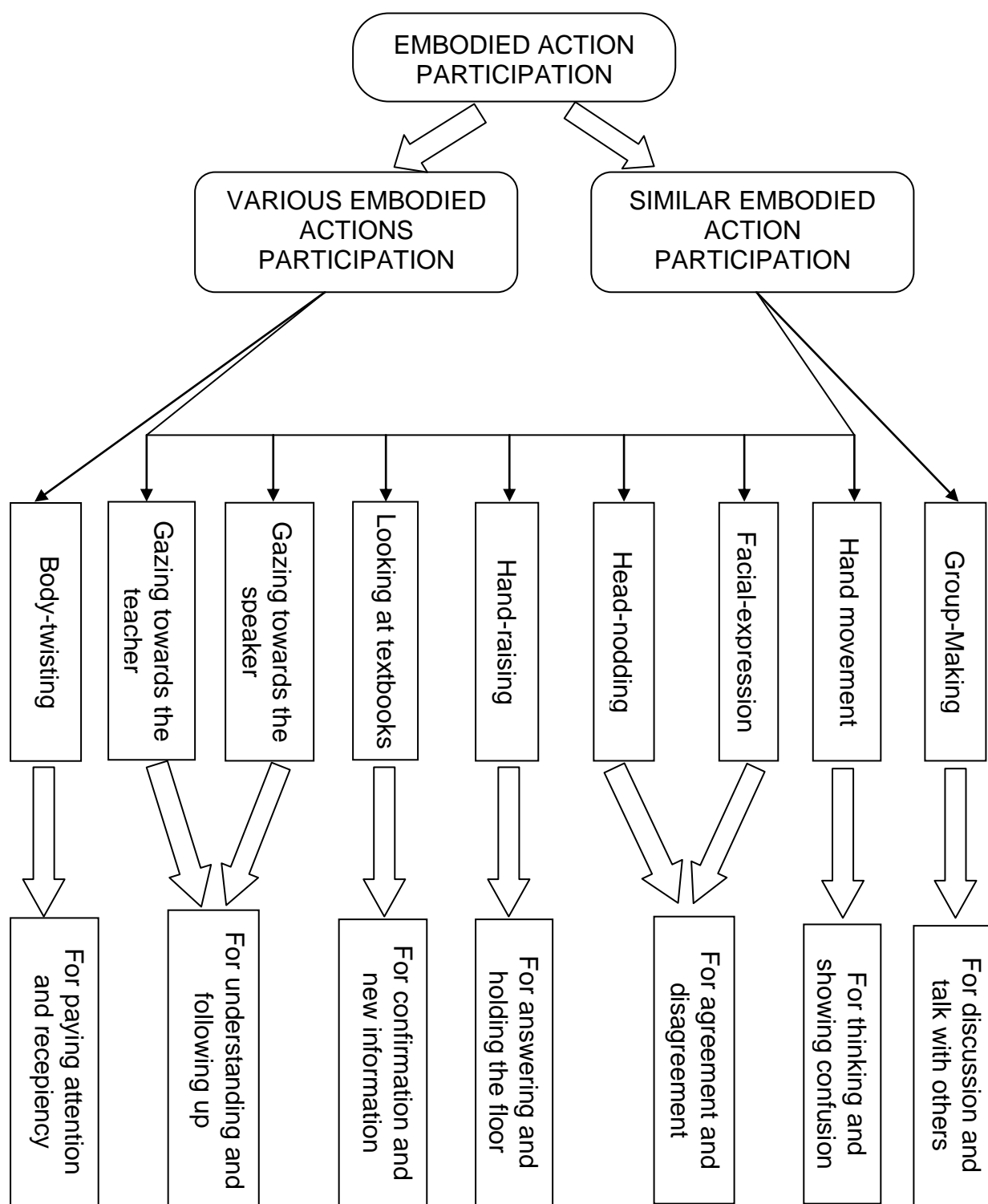
obtained in this study to identify all possible relevant actions produced by students during classroom interaction. Since the principal aim of this study deals with types of student participation other than whole-class oral participation, it was found that students rely on different resources to display their participation in the ongoing interaction. It was seen that students sometimes resort to non-verbal behaviour and desk talk during and/or beyond the ongoing classroom activity and its explicit oral participation. In order to identify the role that these two types of behaviours play in the constitution of classroom participation, two main research questions were derived from the investigation of data obtained in order to deal separately with these types of classroom participation. These questions are presented again in the following sections, together with brief answers to them derived from the findings obtained in the analysis of data in chapters 5 and 6.

**The First research question:** How is student participation organized during the ongoing discussion in EFL classrooms?

The answer to this question was presented in detail in the fifth chapter describing the embodied action which participants employ, using different nonverbal signals during the ongoing discussion in order to participate. In order to answer this question, it was thus necessary to analyse students' bodily movements throughout the ongoing interaction. This analysis included combinations of embodied actions and all conversational mechanisms used by students, such as adjacency pairs and turn-taking patterns in which all of the participants interacted with each other to accomplish their participation in the classroom.

From the data analysis, it is clear that students were following and orienting to what was going on through several types of embodied actions. They were not only speaking when they participated, but were also distributing embodied signals amongst each other. In addition to speaking, they were gazing, smiling, nodding heads, glancing at each other, and orienting to the teacher to participate in the classroom discussion. Having examined these aspects of embodied action in this study, the findings revealed that students employ all these patterns of embodiments at the same time and during the same turn-taking. That is, they produced these embodiments individually according to their understanding of or response to the ongoing talk and the level of participation they wanted to display. Also, it was found that students sometimes used similar embodied action altogether at the same time and in the same turn-taking patterns, because in some situations no more than one action was needed to display the appropriate participation. In both cases, such embodied actions were used for different purposes. For example, students used different patterns of gaze for understanding or following the ongoing talk, facial expressions and head nodding for agreement/disagreement and hand-raising to take the floor. A summary of these findings concerning embodied action during classroom talk is shown again here in Figure 8.1 below:

**Figure 8.1: Embodied actions for participation in classroom activities**



**The Second research question:** How is student participation organized beyond teacher-student oral interaction in EFL classrooms?

A detailed answer to this question was provided in chapter 6. As shown in the data analysis, desk talk was employed by participants so as to be indirectly participated in classroom interaction. In order to answer this question, participants' turns and utterances beyond the ongoing discussion were recorded and analysed. All sequence types and other conversational mechanisms used were uncovered to determine how such utterances related to the ongoing turn-taking.

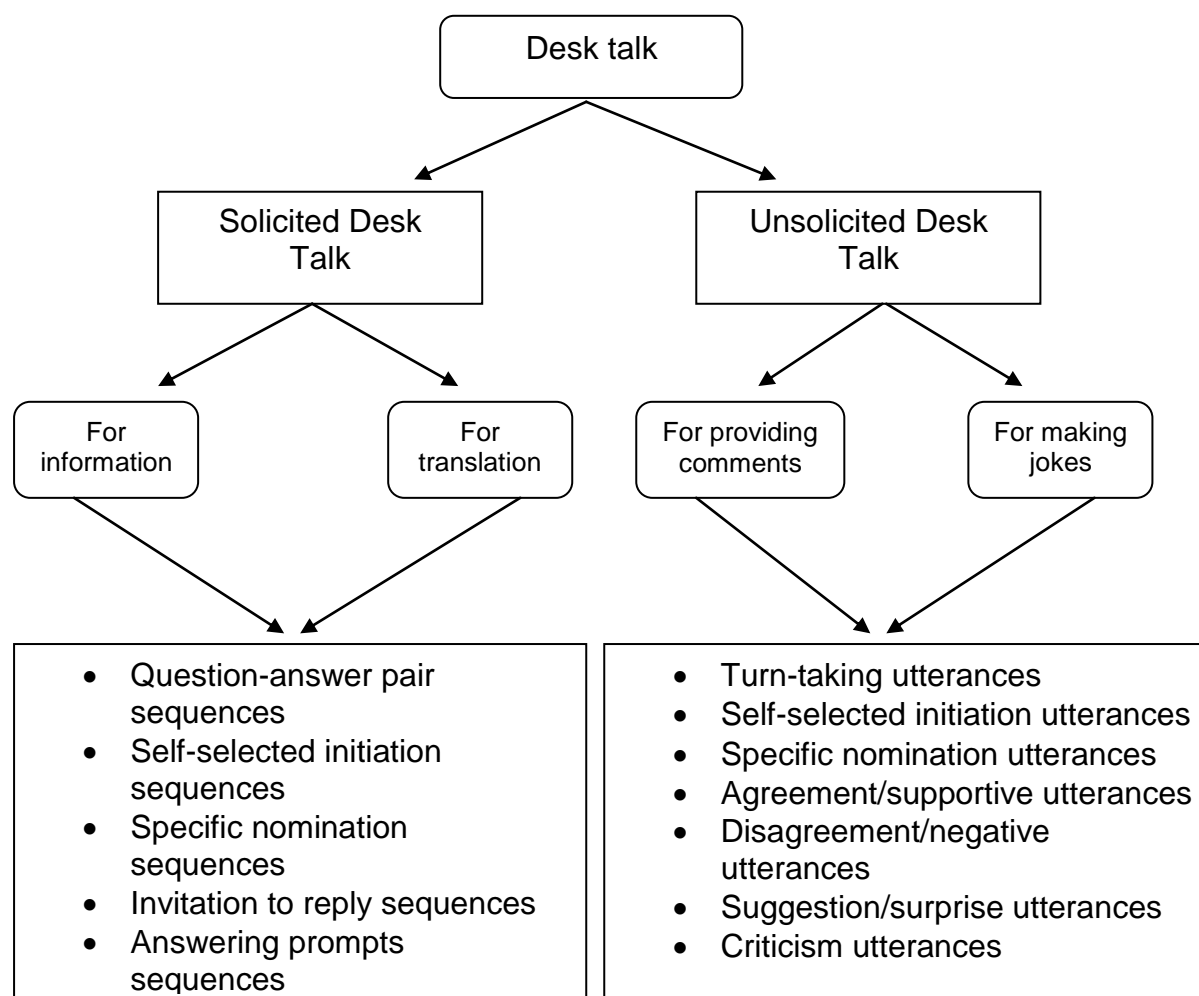
In summary, this type of participation was examined in this study to identify its role in EFL classroom participation. The findings indicated that desk talk was a type of self-selection engagement employed by participants as follows:

In solicited desk talk participants initiated topics to prompt their desk partners using question-answer pairs for translation and gaining more information in order to follow the ongoing discussion.

In unsolicited desk talk participants initiated topics to their desk partners in order to provide comments and make jokes which displayed their participation in the ongoing talk.

The findings concerning desk talk beyond the ongoing classroom talk can be summarised in the form of a diagram presented again here in Figure 8.2:

**Figure 8.2: Sequential environments of desk talk**



### 3. Contributions of the Study

This section highlights various types of contributions that this study has made to the field of pedagogy. This research provides a fundamental basis to understand the nature of EFL classroom participation, especially in the Libyan context. The findings obtained from the current study using the CA perspective contribute to the literature concerning student participation in EFL classrooms, which is a relatively under-researched area, especially in such a context. Very few CA studies have been conducted looking at EFL classroom

participation. Also, no substantial CA research has examined types of classroom participation such as embodied action and desk talk.

Another important contribution made by this study is the methodology used. A CA research approach, including audio and video-recordings, was used in a Libyan context for the first time. This distinguishes the present study from the previous studies conducted in Libya, especially those in classroom settings. For instance, Orafi (2008) employed ethnographic observation and interviews to examine teachers' practices and beliefs in Libyan classrooms, whereas Aldabbus (2008) used computerised and video-recorded observation supplemented by stimulated recall interviews to investigate the impact of language games on classroom interaction. Neither these studies used the CA approach adopted here.

The findings of the current study enhance our understanding of the potential impact of the use of CA in EFL classrooms. Thus, CA could be recommended for use as a general strategy for examining issues relating to EFL classroom interaction.

The findings of the study can also be used to increase teachers' awareness of the potential influence of both embodied action and desk talk on the levels of interaction in the classroom, and how these are used by students to compensate for their lack of opportunity to participate orally.



The findings of this study could then be used to design new strategies that could help in the development of more effective teaching atmospheres in Libyan classrooms. This could be achieved through reducing the number of the students in classes, and also through increasing the time allocated to lessons in order to provide all students with sufficient opportunities for explicit oral participation.

Furthermore, a general criticism of language teaching in Libya provided by UNSCO (2002) stated that Libyan students “are deprived of having opportunities to engage in collaborative work of interaction together in the target language in the classroom” (Aldabbus, 2008, p. 195). The data analysis revealed that the use of embodied action and desk talk here has provided evidence that Libyan students engaged enthusiastically in the ongoing classroom talk. The findings show that students often resort to these types of engagements because there is not enough opportunity for all students to participate orally in their classrooms.

#### **4. Pedagogical Implications**

Three main points of pedagogical significance may be stressed. In the first point, the pedagogical implications of the findings concerning English-language interaction in EFL classrooms in general are described. However, the second point includes the pedagogical implications of the findings of this study relating to learning process. Then, the final point provides the pedagogical implications of the findings concerning training for EFL teachers.

#### **4. 1. Pedagogical implications of the findings concerning English-language interaction in EFL Classrooms**

The findings of the present study have demonstrated the multifaceted nature of classroom interaction by describing the collaborative construction of the embodied action and turn-taking organisation. The study has mainly shed light on how classroom participation varies and is shaped by a variety of actions, not only by classroom talks (Markee and Kasper, 2004), but also by embodied actions and desk talk. These two types of student participation were described in this study, and the findings revealed that most students in EFL classrooms rely on both types to construct social interactions. The social interaction patterns investigated in the current study occurred in a classroom context where students used the English language as a medium of communication. As discussed in chapter one (section 4), English in Libya is not used in daily situations and Arabic is the language used everywhere. Therefore, the only place in which students learn the language is the classroom. However, students often feel that their spoken English is not good enough to provide oral participation. This means that, instead of explicit talk, different types of student participation are brought in to this context. Thus, EFL classrooms can be considered as a good place to study these other modes of student participation. Furthermore, studying student participation in EFL classroom contexts can help to keep language teachers aware of the various forms of student participation which occur, instead of relying solely on explicit oral participation. The findings obtained from this study might also encourage further research into forms of classroom participation in different contexts. In addition, it is noticeable from the various forms of student participation

examined in the current study that most do relate to the ongoing talk. Therefore, classroom interaction is kept going, even if some students rely only on non-verbal participation, as long as teachers and students can understand each other.

Using these various forms of classroom participation instead of verbal engagement alone, however, may negatively affect students' spoken language skills, as this might reduce their opportunity to speak in English in the only place in which they learn the language. This implies that several factors may lead students to resort to these other forms of classroom participation. As mentioned in chapter one, these factors mainly relate to the nature of teacher-fronted activities in EFL classrooms. This could help to broaden teachers' awareness of the need to provide students with different opportunities to become engaged orally. They should be able to encourage students both to translate their movements into oral utterances and to repeat their desk talk to the whole classroom in English. In this way, teachers can provide their students with opportunities to practise their spoken language in this formal setting. Then, students may also be able to speak more correctly in English and become more successful communicators even outside their classrooms.

#### **4. 2. Pedagogical implications of the findings concerning learning process in EFL Classrooms**

Despite the fact that the present study does not focus on describing how learning takes place, it might be situated within the social-interactional

approach to language learning. As Firth and Wagner (1997, 2007) state, learning is viewed as socially constructed through interactants' locally situated activities in both formal and informal interaction. This means that learning is considered to be social in nature as it is jointly achieved through the participants' engagement in the ongoing activities. Moreover, language learning and language use are viewed as interrelated issues in that all language use situations are language learning opportunities for second/foreign language learning (see e.g., Markee, 2004; Firth and Wagner, 1997, 2007). More importantly, Markee (2004) confirms that learning, in general, is viewed as a set of "socially distributed practices that are situated in the interactional space between conversational partners" (p. 593).

As learning is a crucial part of classroom interaction, the present study can be considered to examine how learning opportunities are enabled by demonstrating classroom interaction. More specifically, the participants' interactional practices in this study can be examined to understand the extent to which they play a role in learning and in socially shared cognition. It, thus, builds up on our understanding of the interactional practices used by teachers and students by adopting a similar way to describing their actions as shown in the findings obtained. An evidence from data analysis confirmed that the use of embodied action and desk-talk had an impact on providing more opportunities for classroom participation and therefore on students' language learning. The results of this study revealed that such types of student participation were more successful than depending solely on the traditional way of oral participation. Students produced different types of movements and

desk utterances; thereby appeared more confident to be engaged in their classroom activities. The results of this study further revealed that students not only became more confident in using the other types of participation, but also developed various skills concerning how to learn together. There were several occasions where students assisted each other successfully during embodied action and desk talk. There were instances where they used different strategies in approaching ongoing activities, sharing each other's knowledge and experience and providing signals to one another even if they did not explicitly ask each other for help (see examples provided in chapters five and six).

This does not mean that students prefer to use embodiments and desk talk to support each other instead of using the target language, but they had been in teacher-fronted activities where they lacked the necessary freedom to participate orally and independently. Thus, they found it easier to use their embodied action and resort to desk talk whenever they want to be engaged in the ongoing discussion. Therefore, it could be argued that the results of this study are clear evidence that students in such classes of teacher-fronted activities can work together and gradually become independent learners if they are given more opportunities for using different types of classroom participation. In other words, the findings explained that students do not always need to wait for opportunities to come from the teacher, since they may use alternatives to achieve learning goals, such as providing meaningful signals for the ongoing discussion, looking at the other embodiments produced by other students, and using implicit way of desk talk. The study

thus supports Vygotsky's (1978) claim that learners have a potential ability to do things on their own. This potential can be expanded gradually with the assistance of the teacher through interaction. This may help students to become independent in working together and to develop their ability to learn. This study has presented evidence that, as student participation to conduct classroom activities based on embodied action and desk talk, the teacher's guidance was gradually withdrawn and only supplemented and complemented the students' work when necessary. In this way, students encouraged themselves to take more opportunities for participating independently. As a result, they performed the same role in other occasions independently, where the teacher instead had the right for distributing opportunities for classroom participation.

#### **4. 3. Pedagogical implications of the findings concerning training for EFL teachers**

The particular focus on EFL classes where activities are often led by the teacher has revealed the teacher's role as the representative of the classroom and the manager of social order. This is, teachers embody the actual role of managing how interaction develops and who participates and when (see e.g., Sahlström, 1999). Since the findings revealed that students may participate in the ongoing discussion through different actions, teachers should be able to understand what is going on through students' embodied means. Therefore, students' embodiments are not successful without a shared understanding between the teacher and the students of what is taking place at a particular sequential position and without the temporally sensitive coordination of their

signals. In this way, teachers' understanding and their orientations have marked interactional implications for how students shape their actions in the accomplishment of the teachers' respective interactional and pedagogical tasks. The findings obtained in this study might thus be useful for EFL teachers who often lead classroom activities to understand their students' participation in classroom discussion.

With regard to embodied actions, teachers should be aware of all students' movements in which they display their visible engagement through different patterns of embodiment. They might be able to understand the meaning of different patterns of embodiments such as gaze, head-nodding, and facial expressions. Teachers might also need to understand these movements in order to provide students with relevant opportunities for oral participation when necessary. They should be aware that students' embodiments are very important in providing students with relevant opportunities to organize their classroom participation. The findings also revealed that teachers cannot actually control non-verbal engagements. This is left to the students, who organise their own movements collectively as a group. Students resort to embodied actions to organise their own participation especially when the class is led by the teacher. These embodiments are not only relevant to students to participate in their classroom discussion, but also needed to make a kind of collaborative group participation. Therefore, teachers should be aware of such kind of participation by regarding it as part of their pedagogical objectives. The findings provided in chapter five of this research can act as guidelines for teachers, since they show how students participate in the

ongoing classroom interaction by using several types of embodied action.

With regard to desk talk, however, teachers should be aware that students resort to this type of talk from time to time beyond the explicit classroom talk. They might encourage students to avoid this type of talk by providing them with the opportunity to speak aloud when necessary. Teachers could also deal with this phenomenon in a diplomatic way by encouraging students to feel comfortable enough to repeat their desk utterances or say them directly to the whole class. For instance, they might show their acceptance of desk talk when it occurs, especially since most of these utterances do relate to the ongoing discussion, as shown in the data analysis in this study. Furthermore, teachers might be able to employ this type of talk in the process of language learning. They could ask students to repeat their desk utterances but in English rather than the normal use of L1 as shown in the data analysis. Chapter six of this study describes various types and different purposes for such types of talk, which can operate as guidelines for teachers to take it into account.

## **5. Difficulties Experienced During Research**

Despite its benefits to the research, the methodology adopted did not come without challenges. As discussed in limitations provided in the methodological chapter of research design (see section 5 of chapter four), the first challenge was collecting the video data. It was very difficult to have teachers' and students' agreement to be recorded. Their reason for refusing to be recorded was not always clear. Reasons for refusing could include indifference, such as



their level of English or the fact that most of teachers and students were obviously females. Accessing the Libyan Universities and having contact with teachers was not difficult compared to Libyan Schools; however, chasing the participants who agreed to take part in the study was the most time-consuming. As a result, the present study was delayed due to the extra time needed to collect video data.

The second challenge was conducting the transcription process of the video and audio data. It was laborious and took much more time than anticipated because of the difficulty in understanding students' pronunciation and adding the CA conventions.

## **6. Suggestions for Further Research**

Several suggestions for further research can be made concerning issues raised relating to classroom participation as discussed in this study. For example, further study in the field of interactional embodiment might focus on how teachers in EFL classrooms also employ embodied actions when they provide students with instructions. It would then be possible to clarify the relationship between the embodied actions adopted by teachers and those displayed by students. It would also be possible to discover teachers' perspectives on the use of embodied action by students and how they deal with this type of social interaction.

With regard to turn-taking, the findings show that embodied action constitutes a 'turn' in the sequential organisation of talk. In this respect, the findings

revealed that there is an intimate relationship between student movements and the ongoing talk in the classroom. These embodied actions closely relate to the surrounding talk, and both of them are essentially needed to understand the entire classroom participation. This means that students use in some occasions movements as turns for classroom participation instead of verbal engagement. The constitution of embodied action as a turn-taking has been dealt with in different studies. For example, Olsher (2004) considered embodied action as a completion of non-native speakers' turns. Schegloff (1998) analysed transactional segments to show how participants are able to project 'TCU' completions through body orientation (see also Kendon, 1990). From analysing data in this study, however, the embodied action is only considered when turn-taking is in-progress. The focus was mainly on how students organise their participation by means of body movements within ongoing conversation. As opposed to the general patterns in classroom interaction, however, it was found in the current study that desk turn-taking occurred unexpectedly, because students themselves controlled the initiation of their turns while classroom discussion was in progress. It was also found that most of the turns of desk talk were short and their length was approximately equal and sometimes the second part of adjacency pairs is not produced or delayed. This indicates to the use of embodied action as a turn even in desk talk participation. Therefore, further research might be needed to look at how embodied action constitutes a turn in solicited or unsolicited desk talk.

With regard to desk talk, further investigation is also required into how this type of talk is evaluated in EFL classrooms, perhaps focusing on what EFL students and teachers think about this phenomenon during their classroom activities. Neither the students' nor teachers' perspectives on desk talk were studied in this research owing to time constraints.

Further research into EFL classroom interaction could investigate the use of engagement features such as embodied action for taking and giving the floor, overlapping, selecting the next speaker, and turn completion.

Further research in the field of classroom participation might also be adopted in different contexts. Since this study is mainly concerned with EFL classrooms, similar studies might be conducted to examine the role that embodied action and desk talk play in the teaching and learning of other languages as well as other subjects such as mathematics and science.

## **7. Final Remarks**

The current study has described the reality of student participation in Libyan EFL classrooms. It examined how the students' movements and desk talk relate to the ongoing activities and to the nature of classroom interaction in general. This investigation might provide teachers and researchers in the field of education and language teaching with a better understanding of the exact nature of EFL classroom participation. This nature of student participation in such a context was explored here using the CA approach, which provided a suitable method to analyse the embodied action exploited by participants as a current speaker talks. Many researchers have concluded that the analytical approach used should not isolate talk from its environment (see, e.g., Goodwin, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Olsher, 2004). Thus, the analysis in this study has included a combination of talk and the use of the body in the classroom context. This was done on the basis of a typical CA methodology which is widely recommended for such hybrid objects.

It has become quite apparent in this study that student participation is much more than just speaking or providing oral engagement. It is clear that students were following and orienting to what is going on through different types of engagements. They were not only speaking to their teacher when they participated in classroom discussion, but they were also constructing a kind of group participation through the distribution of signals among themselves and with the teacher. That is, in addition to speaking to participate, they were gazing, smiling, nodding heads, glancing at each other, and orienting to the teacher when the classroom discussion was ongoing. Therefore, student

engagement of other than explicit speaking can be considered as a great sense of classroom participation. Also, the findings have revealed that students were fully participated in class discussions using the strategy of desk talk in different areas of the classroom. Such strong findings obtained in this study might encourage other researchers to conduct further work in this area.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1

#### Transcription Convention (Atkinson and Heritage 1984)

- [[ ]] Simultaneous utterances - ( beginning [[ ) and ( end ] ] )
- [ ] Overlapping utterances - ( beginning [ ) and ( end ] )
- = Contiguous utterances
- (0.6) Represent the tenths of a second between utterances
- (.) Represents a micro-pause (1 tenth of a second or less)
- : Sound extension of a word (more colons demonstrate longer stretches)
- . Fall in tone (not necessarily the end of a sentence)
- , Continuing intonation (not necessarily between clauses)
- An abrupt stop in articulation
- ? Rising inflection (not necessarily a question)
- Underline words indicate emphasis
- ↑ ↓ Rising or falling intonation (after an utterance)
- ° ° Surrounds talk that is quieter
- hhh Audible aspirations
- "hhh Inhalations
- .hh. Laughter within a word
- >> Surrounds talk that is faster
- << Surrounds talk that is slower
- ( ) Transcriptionist doubt
- (( )) Analyst's notes

## Appendix 2

**Newcastle University**  
School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences  
**Student Consent to Participate in a Research Study**

Dear Student,

**January 2009**

My name is *Abdalla Warayet*, a PhD student at Newcastle University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study about classroom interaction.

Your participation will involve completing a series of classroom video recordings and each will be approximately 60 minutes long. Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop your participation at any time. These recordings are anonymous; your name will not be linked to recordings in any presentations or publications that are released from this study. All information you provide will remain strictly confidential.

There are no risks in participating in this study, and you may not benefit personally. I hope that benefits will be obtained in the future from the results of this study.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to e-mail me, at [a.m.warayet@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:a.m.warayet@newcastle.ac.uk) or contact the Graduate Research School, Newcastle University at: [pgreds@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:pgreds@newcastle.ac.uk).

.....

By signing below, I am saying that I have read this form and I have understood what I am being asked to do. I would like to participate in this study with a complete willingness.

**Signature of Student**

**Date**

.....

.....

## Unit 20

### The skill of reading

#### SK20.1: Understanding a newspaper article

**F**or many years, travelling back in time has been just a science-fiction fantasy, but the ability to visit the past or the future may one day become reality. Last week, Milton University awarded a young postgraduate student, Matt Crawford, a five-year scholarship to fund his research into time travel. The grant is not without controversy; critics say that the money could be put to better use in research for a cure to some of mankind's killer diseases, such as cancer, but Milton has defended its decision. We sent science correspondent Karim al-Masudi to investigate.

Matt Crawford is young, intelligent, articulate and passionate about science. If you didn't know, you would say he was a footballer or athlete of some kind, with his strong muscular build and sporty good looks, but Matt lives and breathes physics.

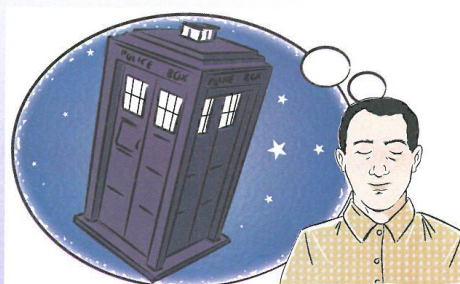
'Time travel has been an interest of mine since I was a little boy,' he explains. 'I used to read science-fiction books by the dozen, and my favourites were always the ones where the hero travelled into the past or the future. I would spend hours reading the *Doctor Who* stories. If you are old enough, you may remember that he had a machine called the Tardis, which was the size of a telephone box from the outside, but inside it was massive. He used to travel all over the universe in the Tardis, and I would go with him in my imagination!'

He went on to explain how he was excellent at mathematics and physics at school, talents which took him on to Milton University to study space-time physics.

But is time travel a scientific possibility? Or is the university just allowing this charismatic young man the chance to live out a childhood fantasy for a few years?

'Time travel is not against the laws of physics,' he says. 'In fact, in the 1940s, a German mathematician called Kurt Goedel proved that if we could twist space-time out of shape enough, making what he referred to as closed, timelike curves, then we could actually drill tunnels through time. But back then, no one knew how to do it.'

So does that mean that science could now allow us to do it? 'Well, the discovery of black holes, which – as you know – are caused by the collapse of a star, have changed the way we think. The power inside a black hole is so enormous that it actually warps space-time, it twists it out of shape.'



Matt leads me to the lab's computer, where he is busy constructing a 'virtual' time machine. He continues his explanation: 'In the United States, a physicist called Dr David Anderson has already developed Time-Warped Field Theory, a process which creates a small energy field about 10 to 12 centimetres in diameter. Inside this field, you can slow down or accelerate time.' He sees my look of incredulity. 'They've already done experiments with seedlings, to prove it works.' Matt is doing his own research on Time-Warped Field Theory and is in constant touch with Dr Anderson.

'When the university told me I had been awarded the scholarship, I was absolutely thrilled,' he says, 'because it allows me to continue the work I started as a graduate. I only wish my father was alive to see what I have achieved. If he had seen this lab, he would have been really amazed!'

So I ask the inevitable question: if Matt could go backwards or forwards in time, where would he go? 'I would go back to talk to the Italian astronomer Galileo. He is really one of the most important figures in modern science, even though he was born over 400 years ago. I could tell him that he was right to believe Copernicus' ideas about the Earth orbiting the sun, and I'd love to show him the modern version of the telescope that he invented! Wouldn't he go forward in time too? I might want to travel forward a few years to see what science discovers in the future, so I can use it in my research,' he says. 'But then again,' he adds with a wink, 'maybe I've already done that!'

- A** Divide the words from the box into two groups: *Time* and *Space*. Add more words of your own.

seconds telescope minutes stars planets  
days black holes universe past future  
hours exploration travel present orbit

- B** Discuss the questions in pairs.

1. What is the difference between a magazine and a newspaper?
2. What are the most popular newspapers in Libya?
3. Are there any English language newspapers?
4. What sort of articles do you prefer to read? Why?

- C** Match the two halves of the sentences to describe different types of newspaper articles.

1. Reports about events that have just happened or ...
2. Articles giving the writer's ...
3. Features which take an in-depth look at ...
4. Short 'fillers' about strange or ...
5. Specialist articles covering a particular subject like ...
  - a) interesting subjects.
  - b) the nature / nurture debate.
  - c) are about to happen.
  - d) a particular subject.
  - e) opinion about a topic.

- D** Read the newspaper article straight through.

1. Match it to an article type in Exercise C.
2. Think of a good title for the article.

- E** Journalists try to answer the 'Five W's' in newspaper articles – who, what, when, where and why.

Make notes for each of the 'W's' from this article.

Who?	
What?	
When?	
Where?	
Why?	

- F** True or false? If false, state why.

1. \_\_\_ Matt invented a machine called the Tardis.
2. \_\_\_ He did not do his university degree in the subjects he was good at at school.
3. \_\_\_ Time travel is a scientific possibility.
4. \_\_\_ Kurt Goedel invented black holes.
5. \_\_\_ Dr David Anderson has invented a way of slowing down or speeding up time.
6. \_\_\_ Matt would like to talk to the inventor of the telescope.

- G** Write five more true or false sentences. Test your partner.

- H** Vocabulary

Newspaper articles often contain words which are new or specialized.

1. How can we deal with new vocabulary?
2. Read the article again. Underline any new words you think it is important / interesting to understand.
3. Compare your list with your partner. Did you choose the same words?
4. Use the plan of attack you studied in SK19.1 to find out the meanings of these words.

- I** What about you?

1. How do you feel about the information in this article?
2. Would you like to travel in time? Why (not)?
3. What do you think would be the most interesting dates / years to travel to? Why?
4. Which three historical figures would you most like to meet? Why?





## The skill of speaking 1

### SK20.2: Active listening

**A** Discuss how the following factors can affect the way we listen to people.

1. What is happening around us while we are listening.
2. What we are doing while someone is talking.
3. Who the speaker is.
4. What the speaker is talking about.
5. The mood of the speaker.
6. Our mood.

**B** The way in which words are said can tell us how a speaker is feeling.

1. Think about how the following people might say the phrase 'It's raining.'
  - a) a family who have decided to have a beach holiday in Malta
  - b) a farmer who needs the rain for his crops and animals
  - c) someone who has never seen rain before
  - d) someone whose house is flooded because it has been raining heavily for weeks
2. How many ways can you think of to say the following phrases?
  - a) There's someone at the door.
  - b) Where's Nadira gone?
  - c) There's something I need to tell you.
  - d) What are you doing?
  - e) He's here.

**C** Work with a partner. Take turns saying the phrases in Exercises B1 and B2. Your partner has to guess how you're feeling.

**C** Cover Exercise D. To fully understand any information that someone is trying to give us, we need to give our full attention to them and listen actively. Discuss how you can do this. Make a list of ideas.

**D** Read through the list. How many of your ideas are included?

Techniques for active listening:

- focus on the speaker
- paraphrase what the speaker says
- ask and respond to questions
- use non-verbal communication, e.g., nodding / shaking your head
- use expressions to show interest, surprise, sympathy, etc.

**E** Read the dialogue.

1. What active listening techniques does B use?
2. Practise the dialogue in pairs.

A: You won't believe what happened this morning.

B: No, what?

A: Well, I was on the way to work and I broke down.

B: Oh dear. What did you do?

A: I didn't know what to do. I couldn't call anyone because I'd left my mobile at home.

B: I'm always doing that.

A: Anyway, a man in a sports car stopped to help me.

B: That was nice of him.

A: You'll never guess who he was – Michael Bowen!

B: Do you mean Michael Bowen the football player?

A: That's the one. He told me he was in town for a meeting with a new football club.

B: Really?

A: He gave me a couple of tickets for the game on Saturday.

B: What? He gave you two tickets for the big match?

A: That's right.

B: Wow! Who are you going to take with you?

**F** Work in pairs. Take turns to tell each other about something that happened to you at the weekend. Use the verbal and non-verbal techniques listed in Exercise D to show interest when you are listening to your partner.

## The skill of speaking 2

### SK20.3: Relating a news story

- A** True or false?  
When we tell other people about a news story we have read / heard, we ...
- \_\_\_ use the headlines as well.
  - \_\_\_ use reported and direct speech.
  - \_\_\_ summarize what we have heard.
  - \_\_\_ introduce what we are going to say with special expressions, such as 'Apparently ...'.
  - \_\_\_ relate the events in the order they happened.
  - \_\_\_ never allow people to ask questions.
  - \_\_\_ often exaggerate.
- B** What are the 'Five W's' of news reporting that you studied in SK20.1?
- C** Work in pairs.
- Student A**
1. Read the first news story.
  2. Underline the key points.
  3. Make notes under the 'W' headings from Exercise B.
- Student B**
1. Read the second news story.
  2. Underline the key points.
  3. Make notes under the 'W' headings from Exercise B.
- D** Tick the words and phrases we use to talk about news stories.
- Guess what I've done!  
Have you heard (the latest) about ...?  
It says here that ...  
Once upon a time, ...  
Did you know that ...?  
Apparently, ...  
Obviously, ...  
You'll never believe what's happened ...  
Did you hear about ...?
- E** What phrases do we use to respond to interesting news? Continue the list.
- My goodness, that's incredible, I don't believe it, ...

- F** Tell your partner about the story you read.
1. Introduce your story, using the phrases you ticked in Exercise D.
  2. Listen to your partner's story. Make comments using phrases from Exercise E.

#### Colleagues receive phone calls from missing scientist

Colleagues of Matt Crawford, the physicist who has been missing since last week, are reported to have received calls to say that he is safe and well.

'Late yesterday afternoon, the phone rang,' said Matt's supervisor, Dr Harold Fontaine. 'When I answered it, I heard a very faint voice. It was Matt. He seemed to be very far away, but said he was OK and hoped to be back next week.' Dr Fontaine had no idea where Matt was phoning from. 'I asked him where he was, but the signal faded before he had a chance to reply,' he said.

Dr Fontaine was not the only person that Matt contacted.

His assistant, Peter Miller, also had a mysterious call, towards midnight last night. 'I recognized Matt's voice straight away,' said Mr Miller, 'although the line was very bad and he sounded as if he was very far away. He just said he was fine and not to worry, and that he had made a very exciting discovery.'

Both scientists refused to make any comment about suggestions that the young space-time postgraduate had gone missing while experimenting with a time machine and had possibly travelled to another dimension.

#### Scientist sends colleagues information

An extraordinary report that missing scientist Matt Crawford has left important information for his physicist colleagues is being investigated by police.

A colleague of the young space-time researcher claimed yesterday that he had travelled back in time to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The man, who did not want to be named, said 'Matt phoned to say he had left us a message behind a stone in the fountain in the town square. He said the fountain was being built and he had managed to place his message while the builders were at lunch.'

Police have removed the stone and whatever was behind it.

'The only information I can give you is that we have found a package behind one of the stones in the fountain, and that archaeologists have confirmed that the stone has not been touched for 800 years,' said a police

## The skill of writing 1

### SK20.4: Achieving coherence (1)



**A** Look at the two pictures.

1. Which one best represents the ideal essay? Why?
2. Which picture is most like your composition writing?
3. What factors help make an essay 'flow'?

**B** Put these parts of a composition into a logical order, the smallest first.

phrase essay word paragraph sentence

**C** Complete the paragraph. Use phrases from the box.

- a) there should be a clear link between them
- b) there is a connection between the sentences in a paragraph
- c) which states the general idea or main theme of the paragraph
- d) go into more detail about this theme
- e) follow your ideas and arguments
- f) towards a logical conclusion
- g) maze of facts and unconnected ideas

If you want to write a good composition, you need to make sure that your reader can ① \_\_\_\_, as it is very easy to get lost in a ② \_\_\_\_. A good composition has coherence, which means that ③ \_\_\_\_ and a connection between the paragraphs. To achieve coherence in a paragraph, you should have a *topic sentence*, ④ \_\_\_\_, and then a series of sentences which ⑤ \_\_\_\_\_. To achieve coherence between paragraphs, ⑥ \_\_\_\_, and the paragraphs should lead the reader ⑦ \_\_\_\_\_.

**D** Match the topic sentences and the paragraphs.

- a) Are all Shakespeare's plays flawed masterpieces?
- b) Macbeth is an example of a tragic hero whose human weakness leads to his downfall.
- c) In order to understand Shakespeare better, it is necessary to visit Stratford-upon-Avon, his birthplace.

1. This picture-postcard town in the centre of England is a mass of thatched cottages and pretty gardens, but besides the houses there is the theatre. A wonderful place to see Shakespeare's works acted on stage, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre is home to all kinds of different performances.

2. By using the word 'masterpiece', are we automatically assuming that a work must be perfect? Is it possible for a painting or play to be perfect and yet not be a masterpiece? I would argue that most of the great works in art and literature are great only because they are not perfect.

3. He is not content with waiting for the witches' prophesy to come true on its own, but tries to push events forward by murdering King Duncan. This crime, prompted by ambition, slowly turns his wife mad and leads to his final fateful encounter with Macduff.

**E** What information might appear in the next sentence in each paragraph in Exercise D?

**F** Complete each paragraph in Exercise D with one of the sentences below.

It is open most evenings and many afternoons throughout the year.

It is this lack of perfection which makes them human and real.

It is this encounter which leads to his death.

**G** Two of the paragraphs belong to the same essay.

1. Which two? Explain your answer.
2. Which paragraph should come first in the essay? Why?



## The skill of writing 2 & 3

### SK20.5: Achieving coherence (2)

- A** Work in pairs. Read the essay on Stratford-upon-Avon.
1. What sort of essay is this? How do you know?
  2. What aspects of Stratford-upon-Avon are described?

A \_\_\_ Every year, thousands of visitors flock to Stratford to visit the house where Shakespeare was born, the school where he was educated, the church where he is buried, and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, where his plays are performed all year round.

B \_\_\_ You see them rushing around the town, or blocking the pavement kerbs taking photos of the most famous buildings. Afterwards, it's back to the coach park and off to see another place on their 'must-see' lists. For those who take the time to get off the tourist trail, there is the chance to discover equally interesting places. One of my personal favourites is the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Guild Chapel, which boasts remarkable stained glass windows and wall paintings in beautiful colours.

C \_\_\_ Stratford-upon-Avon takes its name from the River Avon, which runs through the centre. In the past, the town was a busy inland port. Nowadays, this part of town is a place to relax and watch the local entertainers performing, or to have a meal on one of the restaurant barges. At the weekend, the area is also home to a small craft market, where local artisans sell hand-made jewellery and other wares.

D \_\_\_ You won't be disappointed.

- B** Read the essay again and match the topic sentences with the correct paragraph.
1. Most tourists arrive by coach and only spend a few hours in the town.
  2. So why not come and visit one of the most beautiful towns in England?
  3. One of the most beautiful parts of the town has to be the Waterside.
  4. Stratford-upon-Avon is a picture-postcard town set in the rural beauty of the Warwickshire countryside and is most famous for its association with the playwright William Shakespeare.
- C** Read the text on achieving coherence in SK20.4 again. How does the essay on Stratford-upon-Avon achieve coherence?
- D** You are going to write a description of a place that you know well.
1. Follow the normal brainstorming and planning stages, then write your essay.
  2. Give your essay a suitable title.
  3. Exchange your work with a partner and comment on coherence in your partner's work.

### SK20.6: Editing – British or American English?

- A** In *Skills Book A*, you studied the differences between British and American English. Look at these examples of American English. How would you say them in British English?

1. Did you put out the trash yet?
2. Should I make us a sandwich?
3. Do you have enough time to help me?
4. You don't need to do the washing-up.
5. He ran to the pool and dove in.
6. She's gotten obsessed with computer games.

- B** Look at the text in SK20.5. Find six words which are spelt differently in American English.

- C** Change the following American spellings to British English.

- |              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. enrolment | 6. bank check      |
| 2. neighbor  | 7. dialog          |
| 3. fulfill   | 8. car tire        |
| 4. meter     | 9. to practice (v) |
| 5. argument  | 10. TV program     |

- D** Sometimes, the British and American English words for something are completely different. For example: *lorry* / *truck*.

Make pairs of British and American English words.

lorry	elevator	sneakers	eraser	math
trainers	flashlight	holiday	lift	rubber
car trunk	queue	gas	vacation	maths
truck line	cashier	break time	recess	
torch	café	motorway	freeway	petrol
biscuit	flat	french fries	teller	crisps
pavement	cookie	football	car hood	chips
car boot	soccer	sidewalk	diner	apartment
	chips	car bonnet		

There is no difference in British or American English in terms of which one is more correct. When you are writing, it is more important to be consistent. If you choose to use American English, you need to use American spelling, vocabulary and grammar.



## Listening development

### LP20.1: The power of words – cliché

#### GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL

in this day and age

at this moment in time

at the end of the day

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS

when all's said and done

#### A Before you listen

- Thinking about Arabic ...
  - Make a list of five expressions that you use a lot in Arabic.
  - Tell your partner. Has he / she got any of the same expressions?
  - Do your friends or family use these five expressions?
- What about English?
  - Have you noticed expressions that are used a lot in this course? Which ones?
  - Which expressions in English do you like most? Why?
  - Have you noticed English speakers using other expressions a lot? Which ones?

#### B While you listen

You are going to listen to part of a radio programme about clichés.

- Listen once.
  - What is a cliché?
  - What kind of people should try not to use clichés?
- Listen again.
  - Write all the clichés you hear in the table.
  - Write the meanings in the second column.

cliché	meaning
<i>It's got to get worse before it gets better.</i>	<i>Don't worry! It will get better!</i>

- Answer the questions.
  - What's the difference between a cliché and an idiom?
  - What does 'straight from the horse's mouth' mean?
  - Is it wrong to use clichés?
  - Which group of people use clichés a lot?
  - What does the professor say about stories and anecdotes?
  - Why is it difficult to stop using clichés?
  - What two clichés does the presenter use to close the programme?

#### C After listening

Work in small groups.

- Look at your list of Arabic expressions in Exercise A1. Are they clichés? Explain your answer.
- Do you agree that people tend to tell the same stories and use the same expressions when they speak? Is this a bad thing? Why (not)?

## The skill of listening

### LP20.2: Understanding news programmes

**A** Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

1. What international and domestic stories are in the news at the moment?
2. How do news editors decide which stories to include in a news report?
3. What is the difference in content between a local news programme and a national one?
4. What kind of news stories do you find most interesting?
5. Do you think that all news programmes should be obliged to include good news as well as bad news.

**B** In what order do television news programmes put information in Libya.

Example: *Headlines, then main stories, then ...*

**C** Listen to the news programme.

1. What order does the information come in?
2. What is the lead story – the most important news report?
3. Is this a national or local news programme? How do you know?

**D** Listen again. Write down the main subject of each news story:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

**E** Which story did each of these words and phrases come from? What do you understand by each?

all out for 165  
baffled  
defendants  
face sentences  
in reply  
justify  
notorious  
ransom note  
retired  
slowly spreading  
structural engineers  
struggle  
sway  
synchronized footfalls  
untouched

**F** Listen to each story again. Complete these extracts from the news broadcast in your own words.

Police are investigating the disappearance of young postgraduate scientist Matt Crawford, from Milton University. Mr Crawford was last seen ① \_\_\_\_\_.

In Yorkshire, 1,300 workers at the Rovam car factory in Harton are to lose their jobs. The factory is owned by the German company BJR, which announced ② \_\_\_\_\_.

In London, architects and structural engineers have allowed the new Millennium footbridge over the Thames to reopen after ③ \_\_\_\_\_.

The jury has retired to consider its verdict in the notorious Fallswell robbery trial, which ④ \_\_\_\_\_.

And now to sport. England have beaten ⑤ \_\_\_\_\_.

And finally the weather. Today will be ⑥ \_\_\_\_\_.

**G** Which news item would you like to read an in-depth article about?

**H** What do you think has happened to Matt Crawford?

## Pronunciation 1 & 2

### LP20.3: Short story (17)

#### A Diphthongs

1. Underline the diphthongs in the story.
2. Show the pronunciation in each case.
3. Check your answers with your partner.
4. Listen and check your answers.

#### B Reading aloud

1. Try to copy the pronunciation of each sentence after the tape.
2. Practise reading each sentence on your own.

/aɪ/

'You didn't ask me why I was looking into the pond,' said Tom. Janet already thought of him as Tom, not Grandfather.

'You were watching the lights,' said Rick, with a superior look.

'Don't be silly,' said Janet. 'Tom was looking into the pond before the lights appeared.'

'Oh,' said Rick. 'Then I guess he followed the tracks – like me.'

They both stared at him.

'That's right,' said Tom. 'Well done. Where did you learn woodcraft?'

'Everyone knows how to follow tracks – except girls, of course.'

'Well, anyhow,' said Tom, 'You're quite right. I followed those big pointed tracks, but they disappeared near the pond.'

Janet thought for a moment. 'So, the animals that made the tracks must be able to swim. They must live in the pond.'

'Hey, that's it,' said Rick, getting excited. 'They must climb out of the pond and prowl through Devil's Wood.'

As he said the words, his eyes lit up – 'and ... and ...'

'And then climb back in,' said Janet quickly. She didn't want Tom to make another slip and mention the dead man with animal marks on his body.

'So how are we going to trap it, Grandpa? I know all about pits and nets and ...'

'Well now,' said Tom, 'I don't exactly want to catch it. I just want to find out what it is. Here's what we're going to do ...'

### LP20.4: Short story (18)

#### A Friction consonants

1. Underline the friction consonants in the story.
2. Show the pronunciation in each case.
3. Check your answers with your partner.
4. Listen and check your answers.

#### B Reading aloud

1. Try to copy the pronunciation of each sentence after the tape.
2. Practise reading each sentence on your own.

/f/ /ð/

Half an hour later they were heading back

/z/ /ð/ /z/

towards the pond. Tom was carrying a large

/s/

rucksack. When Rick asked him what was in it, he just winked and said, 'Goodies.' Rick thought he meant sweets. Janet was sure he didn't. Tom also had his rifle with him.

'That won't be any good if it's a ghost,' Janet pointed out.

'You said you didn't believe in ghosts,' her grandfather reminded her.

The tracks from Tom's cottage were easy to follow in the dusty earth, until they were near the pond. Then, in an area of dried leaves, the tracks stopped. 'They must lead to the pond,' said Tom. 'Unless ...' He looked up at the trees above him, but there was no sign of any rope or ladder.

'Over here,' shouted Rick. 'I've found them.'

Janet was beginning to realize that her brother was not just a little pest. He was, in fact, very clever. When they reached him, they saw the tracks again, leading away into a dense piece of undergrowth.

They fought their way into the bushes and found an old well. The tracks led up to the side of the well. 'I think we have found out where our ghosts live,' said Tom.

## Lab work 1

### LP20.5: Functions – reporting and exaggerating

**A** Read and listen to the conversation.

- A: What are you reading?  
 B: More about that scientist Matt Crawford.  
 A: Yes, it's quite an interesting story.  
 B: Interesting? It's absolutely amazing!  
 A: I suppose it *is* quite unusual.  
 B: Unusual? It's absolutely incredible!

**B** Listen and repeat B's lines.

**C** Cover the conversation. Listen and say B's lines.

- A: What are you reading?  
 B: \_\_\_\_\_  
 A: Yes, it's quite an interesting story.  
 B: \_\_\_\_\_  
 A: I suppose it *is* quite unusual.  
 B: \_\_\_\_\_

**D** Listen and respond, using the prompts.

- Example:  
 You hear: 1. It's quite interesting. (amazing)  
 You say: *Interesting? It's absolutely amazing!*  
 You hear: Interesting? It's absolutely amazing!

**E** Listen and say the opposite.

- Example:  
 You hear: 1. It's really interesting.  
 You say: *I think it's really boring.*  
 You hear: I think it's really boring.

**F** Put these sentences into reported speech. Use 'He said'.

- Example:  
 You hear: 1. 'I'm in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Milton.'  
 You say: *He said he was in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Milton.*  
 You hear: He said he was in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Milton.

**G** Listen to Matt's phone call. Report what he said. Record your voice.

'Hello. It's Matt here. I've travelled back in time to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, it's 1256. I'm going to try and return in a few days' time, but I'll need your help. I'm going to leave instructions for you behind a stone in the fountain.'



## Lab work 2

### LP20.6: Spoken Language – short story (19)

- A** Read and listen to a shortened version of the story you studied in LP20.3 and LP20.4. The story has some mistakes. Underline the words that are different.

Grandmother was surprised that Janet knew witchcraft and could also follow tracks. Rick said that the big, rounded tracks had disappeared near the pool. Janet thought for a moment.

'So, the ghosts that made the tracks must be able to walk. They must live in the woods,' she said.

'They must climb out of the pond and walk through Devil's Pond,' said Rick.

'And then climb back out,' said Janet slowly.

Tom said he didn't want to trap the monster, just find out what it was.

An hour later they were heading back from the pond. Tom was carrying a small rucksack with what he called 'foodies' in it. Tom also had his knife with him.

The stream from Tom's cottage was easy to follow in the dry earth. When they reached the pond, the stream stopped. 'They must lead to the farm,' said Tom. 'Unless ...' He looked up at the flowers above him, but there was no sign of any animals or ghosts.

'Over there,' shouted Janet. 'I've found them.'

When they reached her, they saw the stream again, leading away into a small piece of underground.

They fought their way out of the bushes and found an old path. The tracks led down to the bottom of the well. 'I believe we have found out where our animals live,' said Tom.

- B** Listen again and write the correct words above each underlined mistake.

- C** Cover the text. Study the prompts below. Try to think of the complete sentence for each prompt. Do not write anything.

1. Grandfather / surprised / Rick / woodcraft and / follow tracks
2. Rick said / tracks / disappeared / pond
3. Janet thought / moment
4. 'So / animals / tracks / swim
5. 'must live / pond
6. 'must climb / pond / prowl / Devil's Wood' / Rick
7. 'climb / in' / Janet quickly
8. Tom / didn't want / trap / monster / find out what / was
9. Half / hour / heading / pond
10. Tom / large rucksack / 'goodies' in it
11. also / rifle
12. tracks / cottage / easy / follow / dusty earth
13. When / pond / tracks stopped
14. 'must lead / pond' / Tom. 'Unless ...'
15. looked up / trees above
16. no sign / rope / ladder
17. 'here / Rick / found
18. When / reached / saw tracks / leading away / dense / undergrowth
19. fought / bushes / found / old well
20. tracks / up / side / well
21. 'think / found out / ghosts live' / Tom

- D** Listen and respond with a complete sentence.

Example:

You hear: 1.

You say: Grandfather was surprised to discover that Rick knew woodcraft and could also follow tracks.

You hear: Grandfather was surprised to discover that Rick knew woodcraft and could also follow tracks.